

Cruising at 14.4:
Faster, Flawless
Access-p. 20

Saving Time for
Business-p. 30

UFOs: Reasons to
Believe-p. 38

10 FEB 1994
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M A G A Z I N E



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What has Jerry Garcia been up to?

How do I care for my child's croup cough?

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Are there simple tutorials on customizing Windows?

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What is the latest research reported in the trade press on recycling plastics?

Which recording of Brahms Concerto in D Minor should I buy?

What are the low-cost alternatives when wiring network hubs?

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Are there recent articles on new treatments for allergies?

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Can I find a comparative review of contract management

10 FEB 1994

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Serious illness is a scary proposition that overwhelms a person with the most basic questions: What is wrong with me? What can I do? With the popularity of tightly scheduled managed-care HMOs rising, obtaining the latest medical information from online databases can put you in control of the healing process and make you and your doctor partners instead of adversaries. Plus: How self-help might help health care; holistic medicine; tracking family health history; research tips; online resources.

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20 Speedy Modem Relief

Bought yourself one of those fleet-of-baud 14,400 bps data modems, didja? Those traveling the info highway at the new breakneck speed have uncovered a few potholes. Online support forums can help put the buzz back into your bps. Also: The where and why of 14.4 access; coming speed hikes; table of support forums.

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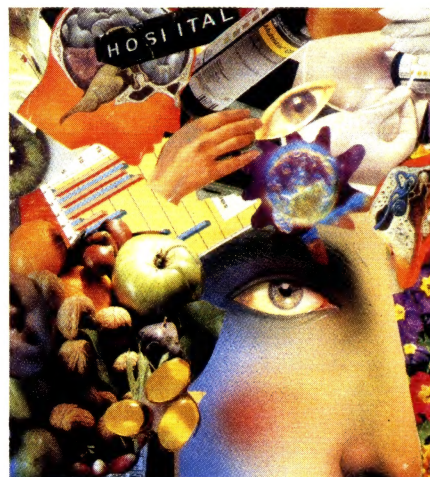
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Too Hot to Print

► Catch computer industry news as it happens, read today's news, commentary and product reviews. You'll find it only in *Online Today*, a daily updated newspaper.

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Publisher

Calvin F. Hamrick III

Editorial Director

Richard A. Baker

Editor

Douglas G. Branstetter

Art Director

Thom Misiak

Manager of Magazine Operations

Linda Cummings

Managing Editor

Kassie Rose

Associate Editor

Christopher J. Galvin

Assistant Editors

Michele D. Kinnamon, Cary Roberts

Design Coordinator

Dorothy Hogan

Production Coordinator

Drew Holland

Senior Writer

Cathryn Conroy

Contributing Editors

Charles E. Bowen, Hardin Brothers, John Edwards,
Mary Mitchell, Michael Naver

Copy Editor

Kacy Cook

Proofreader

Mej Stokes

Electronic Publishing Supervisor

Susan Toombs

Production Assistant

Jody Myers

Editorial Assistant

Bobbi Dominick

Editorial Intern

Tracy C. Mygrant

CUSTOMER SERVICE

For questions, problems, address changes

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ADVERTISING

Associate Publisher

Peter A. Scott, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd.,
Columbus, OH 43220; 614/457-8600; 70003.3731

National Sales Manager/Electronic Mail

Keith Arnold
614/457-8600

Mid Atlantic

Jennifer Stothers
212/366-0393

Midwest and West

Tom Emmons
614/457-8600

South and Northeast

Scott Tillet
614/457-8600

Direct Connection

Meghan Obert
614/457-8600



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Dear Reader

Have you ever felt that taking your body to the doctor is like taking your car to the shop? All you can do is tell the "mechanic" about the mysterious symptoms and hope he finds the cause. You also have to trust him.

That's the way most of us handle illness. We stick our heads in the sand and pray the problem isn't serious, or expensive. When the diagnosis is made, we do what we're told. Many times that response is out of fear. Most times it's because we don't know what else to do.

This isn't the best way to take care of ourselves, however, as Senior Writer Cathryn Conroy discovered while researching and writing this month's feature, beginning on page 10. It's to our advantage to log on to the CompuServe Information Service, learn the facts of an illness and be able to talk knowledgeably with the doctor. In fact, Frank W. Meissner, M.D., a cardiologist with the United States Air Force and sypsof of the Medical Forum, told Conroy he *seeks* dialogue with his patients.

Cancer patient Paul Hansen took lists of questions and a tape recorder to his doctor appointments. He told us the information he gathered on HealthNet, the Cancer Forum and Physicians Data Query helped him figure out the questions he needed to ask his doctor. John and Donna Bryan of Cincinnati, Ohio, similarly sought information when their daughter became ill, and it was a NORD database researcher who helped them find articles on the rare disease.

In addition to illustrating how CompuServe members take control of their medical problems, this month's feature also looks at health insurance issues, holistic medicine and the role heredity plays in our health. Also, we tell you how to talk to doctors online and provide a stepladder on researching CompuServe's vast medical resources. As John Bryan advises, "...leave no stone unturned."

* * *

High-speed modems are a popular means of travel on the data highway, but the pavement is not always smooth. Faster data transmission often yields configuration and compatibility problems. Stephen Schwartz of Westchester County, New York, experienced such problems when his 14,400 bps CompuServe connection failed using Macintosh Navigator auto-access software. Like many high-speed modem users, he received helpful advice in several modem-related forums. You can read about Schwartz and other members' high-speed experiences in "14.4's Speed Bumps," page 20, and take advantage of the insight offered by online experts.

Connecting to CompuServe at 14,400 bps is now a reality for members in several U.S. cities. That means a savings of online connect-time charges for many activities, especially downloading large library files. See page 21, "14.4 Access: Where and Why," for more detail.

Douglas G. Branstetter
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Windows NT Support

The November article "Running on NT" (p.26) covered Microsoft admirably but omitted Digital's forums.

Through our multivendor customer services, Digital provides user and system-manager support in the Windows NT Forum (GO DEC4WNT). We also provide support for Pathworks and interoperability products in Digital's PC Integration Forum (GO DECPCI). Both forums provide support for the DECpc AXP 150, the world's fastest PC, and the Windows NT Forum also provides a place to discuss Digital's storage products.

Bob Withers
Windows NT Forum Sysop
Falcon, Colorado

Politically Correct?

In response to a very saddening letter by Shakurra Amatulla in the November *CompuServe Magazine* (p.4): Let's not extend the suffocating codes of Political Correctness into technological communication. The beauty of online services is, in fact, that you truly can be anyone you want to be. No one online is judged according to appearance, gender, religion, etc. It is a *truly* "color blind" medium. Please, Ms. Amatulla, let's keep it that way.

Melissa Reynolds
Arlington, Virginia

Encryption

Thank you for the interesting article about computer encryption and encryption programs ("The Digital Deadbolt," November, p.19). The article rekindled my long-time interest in this area. I have tried to download some of the programs mentioned in the article (specifically, Pretty Good Privacy 2.3 from the ZiffNet Public Brand Software Forum and DES Code from the HamNet Forum) but could not find them. Can you help?

Itzhak Rotbard
Tel Aviv, Israel

Editor's note: Because of the unresolved legal issues surrounding PGP and other full-strength encryption programs and code, sysops in ZiffNet's Public Brand Software Forum and other CompuServe forums have removed these files from their libraries. Many shareware and freeware encryption programs of lesser, but still viable, strength are available.

"The Digital Deadbolt" left out one very important link. What about security for e-mail in transit? If I use CompuServe for e-mail and encryption is available, I still

have to get my letter from my PC to CompuServe. It may pass through several communication channels between here and there. Obviously, you can't secure the line from my house to your node, but the line from your node back to CompuServe easily can be secured. Customer Service tells me that CompuServe uses a "very secure" packet network. My company's communications experts say it is harder to eavesdrop on a packet network. However, it's not "very secure" from a true hacker. Equipment exists that secures communication via encryption and/or authentication; in fact, we manufacture some of it.

Jon Backus
Racal-Guardata
Hagerstown, Maryland

Three cheers for Christopher Galvin's superb article on e-mail encryption. Our corporate communications firm has just started to tap the wealth of information CompuServe offers, and this piece on encryption came just as we started expanding our work to encompass e-mail.

Besides being easy to read and informative, Galvin's article was meaty enough to explain the intricacies of digital encryption. As a result, we are now able to offer our clients a more thorough solution to their online security concerns.

Thank you, thank you!

Tod K. Maffin, President
VisionMedia Communications Inc.
Richmond, British Columbia

Shareware

I enjoyed Mr. Rathbone's article "The Soft Sell of Shareware" (November, p.10), especially his research into the business of software authors. The business of shareware distribution also would have been an interesting topic. Knowing where to obtain shareware for a reasonable price, just to try it, is challenging for consumers.

I favor the Public (software) Library in Texas. While not an online service, it is the best distributor in the United States. A catalog is available from CompuServe User ID number 71355.470. You can receive diskettes or CD-ROM disks that describe and review each shareware program in the library before you buy.

Ken Santopietro
Waterbury, Connecticut

Toll-Free Numbers

In reply to all the letters about solving the 800 number problem (November, p.4): German TELEKOM operators do not establish 1-800-connections. From within Ger-

many, U.S. toll-free numbers are accessible only via USA Direct (0130-0010 for AT&T, 0130-0012 for MCI) and calls are not free of charge. Therefore, a calling card, issued by the respective long-distance carrier, is required. The resulting charges, as much as \$4 for the first three minutes and another \$2 for each additional minute, then will be billed to the respective credit card account.

Michael M. Zerwell
Wuppertal, Germany

The November Letters contained three letters about problems that customers outside the United States have when trying to call U.S. advertisers' toll-free numbers. Unfortunately, none of the solutions are of much help to potential customers in the United Kingdom.

Very few people outside the United States carry MCI or AT&T cards—according to MCI, it takes "three to four weeks" to obtain one.

U.S. advertisers who want to attract customers from non-U.S. countries should quote a regular phone number in addition to their 800 number or make use of International Data lines which, from the United Kingdom, have the suffix 89 (0800 89 ...).

Chris Philip
Whitbourne, United Kingdom

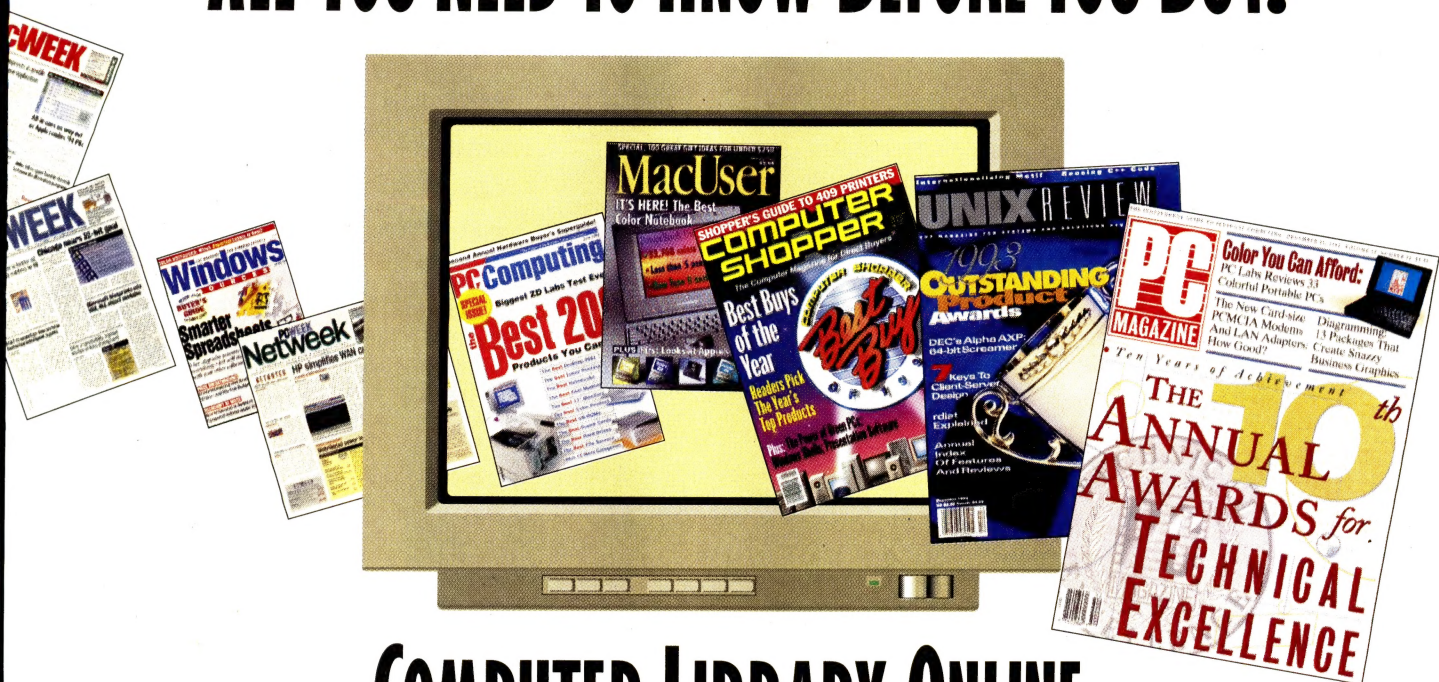
To contact AT&T and MCI to obtain calling cards in France, dial 190011 for AT&T and 190019 for MCI. You will be connected to a U.S. operator who will take your calling card order.

Herve Laoureux
Rouen, France

Send a Letter

Send your letter to the editor by CompuServe Mail to 76004,3302 and receive a \$25 connect credit if it is published. **We cannot acknowledge letters or answer questions through this User ID.** For questions, problems, address changes, etc., please contact Feedback (GO FEEDBACK) or call Customer Service in the United States at 800-848-8990; in France, 36 63 81 31; in Germany, 0130 86 46 43; or the United Kingdom, 0800 289458. GO QUESTIONS for other countries' Customer Service numbers.

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* \$5 usage credit available only to first-time users of Computer Library Online.

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MONITOR

Computer Memories

If you think computer nostalgia is remembering when PCs had 10MB hard disks and 640K of RAM, visit the Seniors Forum (GO SENIORS) for a taste of what computers were like in the 1950s and '60s.

Member Ed Wiggins recently recalled his days as a student at Indiana's Purdue University in the early '60s. "We punched our FORTRAN program card decks, and they were sent to the University of Chicago on the Greyhound bus," he says. "After they were run on the University of Chicago's computer, the output came back on the bus. The average turnaround time was about 36 hours." Notification of a syntax error, notes Wiggins, involved a day-and-a-half "response time."

In 1960, member Darrell Call was studying programming on an IBM 650 at the University of Kansas. What he remembers most was the heat the computer generated. "I thought that machine could heat the largest dorm on campus," he says. "But it had a lot less computing power than a PC."

Marte Brengle, who in 1969 studied programming at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, was something less than an expert IBM card puncher. "One 'program' of mine made the line printer spit paper halfway to the ceiling before they got it stopped," he says. "They were kind enough to give me the whole stack of paper, each page of which had a maximum of one character."

Member Brainerd Wood recalls how Remington Rand dealt with the problem of making its gigantic vacuum-tube-driven Univac 120 computers look not-so-gigantic in its advertisements. "They contracted with a New York ad agency, and the agency put out a call for models with a minimum height of 6-feet-2-inches tall."

Getting Your Opus into Hardcover Isn't So Hard

So you've written the Great American Novel or Great American How-to Book, but no publisher is willing to put your epic tome into print. Don't lose heart. You can follow the lead of many Literary Forum (GO LITFORUM) members and publish the work yourself.

Thanks to desktop computers and personal publishing software, producing a professional-looking book isn't much more difficult than creating a newsletter. All you need is some publishing knowledge and the desire to succeed, according to Peter Goodman, a Literary Forum member and president of the Marin Small Publishers Association, an organization of small and self-publishers in Marin County, California.

Goodman notes that getting a book into print is relatively easy—the real hurdle is in moving your books into stores. "If you hated being rejected at a dance party in high school just wait until you start making your moves on a big distributor or bookstore," he says.

Most self-publishers eventually link up with one or more service organizations that tie their members into marketing and support alliances. "Anyone contemplating getting into publishing should join an organization and feast on other people's experiences and suggestions," he says.

Goodman believes that many self-publishers fail because they try to tackle jobs they're unqualified to handle.

"If you're not a graphic designer, find a professional to help you with your book cover," he says. "Hire a professional editor or proofreader to check your English for sense and grammar. Send your manuscript out to authorities in your field for comments. Find a printer who will walk you through the production process and explain what you don't know."

To learn more about self-publishing, chat with the members in the Literary Forum's Section 2, "Markets/Self-Publishing." You also can read or download the text file on self-publishing, SP3.DL, in Library 2, "Market Maneuvers."

A PaperChase Processor

Making use of the results of PaperChase searches just got easier with the debut of PostSearch PC 1.0 for DOS.

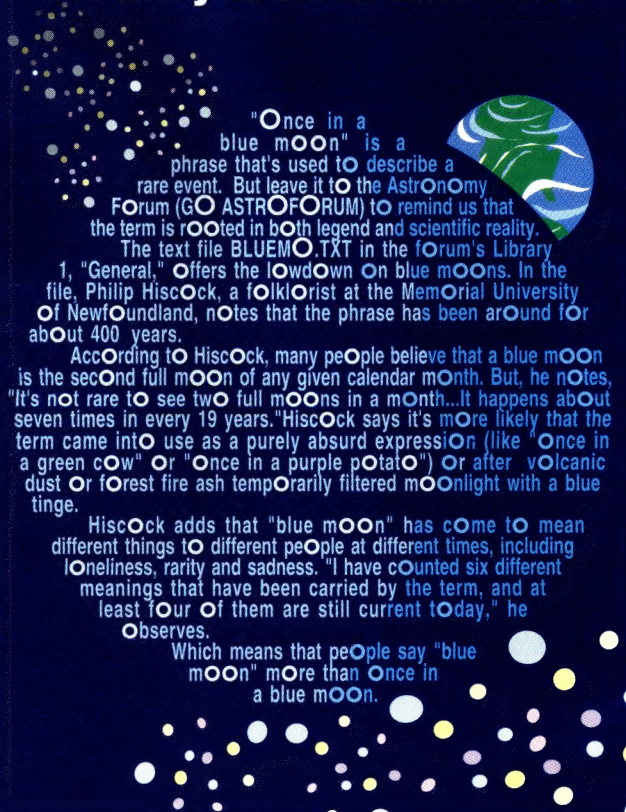
Free for the downloading, this "post process filter" automatically filters completed PaperChase searches offline. It reads a captured search file and then creates a new file, eliminating prompts, menus, commands and error messages, and leaving just the database records.

Written by T.R. Halvorson, who also created PostSearch KI, a post-processor for Knowledge Index searches, PostSearch PC also sifts through the filtered records one by one so you can review them or write selected records to new files with single-key commands.

PaperChase (GO PAPERCHASE) offers user-friendly access to a variety of professional medical sources.

PostSearch PC is available in Library 4, "Info Professionals," of the Working From Home Forum (GO WORK) in file PSPC10.EXE.

The Story of Lunar Likelihood



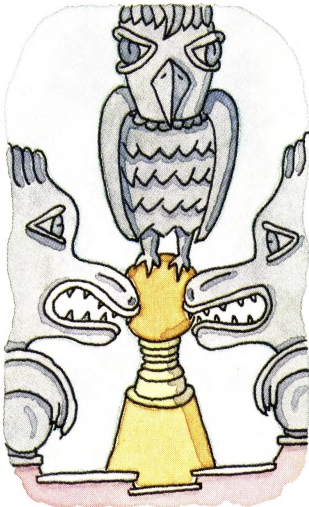
How to Make a House a Creepy, Fortified Home

It's pretty common for CompuServe forum members to grill each other for advice about LAN systems and laptops, but Rick Richards was interested in getting information about a decidedly different technology: medieval stone gargoyles.

The Great Gargoyle Search was launched last fall when Richards began building a house in rural central Illinois. "It's a Tudor style, and we're going to great pains to make it look old," he explains. "It has towers and a very tall, very sloped roof. It's been referred to as a castle, and I've been told I need a moat around it."

But what Richards really wanted was gargoyles—those rat-faced weirdos that hang over the sides of European cathedrals. When his contractor claimed not to be able to find any, Richards began checking the Electronic Yellow Pages on CompuServe, but he came up

empty, too. So, he posted notices in forums, including the U.K., Dinosaur, Diabetes, HamNet, TAPCIS and Outdoors forums among others. Anyone know where to get a really big gargoyle? Suggestions ranged from the sublime (an Englishman who suspiciously wondered if



the crazy American was actually building a church) to the ridiculous (suggestions in one forum that Richards might just cast the features of the resident sypso).

In the course of his quest, Richards met a man whose wife had been looking for a dragon weathervane for 20 years; Richards found out about a dragon catalog on another forum and gave the information to the man and his wife. But forumites also unearthed information on latter-day gargoyle makers in at least four U.S. cities.

When we last checked with Richards, he was en route to Boston to truck back his roof guardians. "It's been fun, to say the least, conducting my search on CompuServe," he says, "but not half as much fun as showing my contractor just what can be accomplished with a simple question."

We Doubt a Baby-Name Book Would've Helped

When Californian Donald Whittemore bought his new Toshiba T6600 laptop—a "power-sucking brute" of a '486-33/66 with 20MB of memory, a 1.7GB hard drive, internal CD-ROM, a PCMCIA 14.4-bps fax/modem and five SCSI devices—he sought help in the Toshiba Forum (GO TOSHIBA) for a name worthy of his hulking hardware.

Brawn-and-brains suggestions from helpful members included Hal (from 2001), Aragorn (a mighty fighter in Tolkien's Ring stories), Max (for

Maxwell Smart or Max Headroom), Tosh Togo (after the professional wrestling name of the actor who played "Oddjob," the hat-hurling hired goon in *Goldfinger*) and Hillary (no explanation necessary). "Call it Arnold," advised another forumite, "and no matter how many times you crash it, it'll always come back."

In the end, Whittemore decided on a similar suggestion: "Terminator," in honor of both Schwarzenegger and his own SCSI connectors.

A More Perfect Union: Planning a Wedding by PC

The Wedding Manager, a shareware program written by CompuServe member Alec Taylor to assist him over the hurdles in planning his own wedding, helps soon-to-be brides and grooms manage expenses, the guest list and a reception seating chart.

The software tracks everything from the mundane (stamps for invitations) to the most important (the wedding gown). It provides a list of more than 70 items to include in a wedding, ranging from aisle runners to a rented helicopter.

Cost-conscious lovers can use The Wedding Manager to establish a budget and then track expenses for each preparation. Statistics screens even provide information on budget deviations, cash spent and cash remaining.

The name and address of

each guest, as well as invitation and thank-you note status, can be tracked. Shower and wedding gifts also can be entered. An integrated seating chart uses this guest list information to design the reception seating.

Available for downloading in Library 15, "Survival Center," of the Students Forum (GO STUFO) in file WEDMAN.ZIP, The Wedding Manager 4.5 carries a shareware registration fee of \$39.95. CompuServe members can register the program online (GO SWREG).



Back to BASIC

Put a party hat on your PC. Toss some rolls of computer printout into the air. The BASIC programming language turns 30 in 1994.

The Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code was invented by John Kemeny and Thomas Kurtz, two Dartmouth College professors who wanted to make computer programming accessible to noncomputer experts. And while many 1960s-era languages have withered or died, BASIC continues to thrive and attract legions of new users.

In the IBM Programming (GO IBMPRO) and Microsoft BASIC (GO MSBASIC) forums, members are celebrating by analyzing the reasons behind its success.

"The cynic would say it has lasted because the richest guy in America likes it and considers it the foundation of his empire," states member Jim Mack. "But as one who used BASIC 30 years ago—Kemeny and Kurtz's original on a GE timeshare from Dartmouth—I'd say it's lasted because it made programming accessible to everyone. The interpreted nature of the language provided instant feedback. It's hard to imagine today what a gift that was and hard to overstate how important it was then."

Member Dan Barclay attributes BASIC's enduring popularity to its adaptability. "Unlike several older languages, BASIC changed with the times. Today's BASIC supports programming structures that simply weren't available in earlier versions."

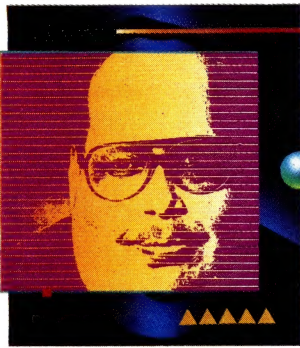
"What I like about BASIC is its simplicity," says member Carl Gundel. "BASIC doesn't intimidate like some other languages, and there aren't a lot of arcane rules to remember as in C or Pascal. I guess I see BASIC as the everyman's programming tool."

Monitor

Contributors: Cathryn Conroy, John Edwards, Lindsay Van Gelder

Behind the Screens

with John Edwards



Spot Junior's 'Achievements'

If you've read one hacker news report, you've read 'em all. (A cynical journalist, that's me.) At least, that is, when it comes to one important aspect of the typical hacker story.

Somewhere deep down in the report, buried at around paragraph 1,987, you'll always see the hacker's mom declare: "Why, I had no idea that little Louis was crippling the North American air-traffic control system with his Macintosh video game. I know he really likes that high-tech stuff. He always keeps his bedroom door locked. I wish those men with the FBI windbreakers would bring my color TV back."

Generally speaking, moms are about as familiar with hacking as I am with the joys of aerobic exercise.

So for mothers everywhere, I humbly offer the following "10 Warning Signs that Your Son May Be a Hacker":

1. Your phone bill lists

1,987 household lines.

2. Your son tells you that his private interview with the Secret Service agent was for a social studies class essay.

3. You receive mail addressed to Phil E. Phreak.

4. The kid cheers Lex Luthor whenever a *Superman* movie runs on TV.

5. The CEO of a regional Bell operating company appears on your doorstep, sobbing uncontrollably and begging forgiveness.

6. You find a copy of *Phrack* magazine hidden under the underwear in your son's bedroom dresser. (The *Playboy* magazine is next to the handheld scanner, of course.)

7. The kid asks for a Novell Access Server for his birthday.

8. The little silver-colored wheel on your electric meter spins so fast it flies off, slices your neighbor's elm tree neatly in two and flattens a tire on a Chevy Monte Carlo three blocks away.

9. Your son's English teacher calls, sounding really curious, to ask why the kid selected the Oklahoma City phone directory for his monthly book report.

10. He names Robert Morris Jr. as his "Most Admired American."

Forewarned is forearmed, as they say. Excuse me, the phone is ringing.

For more BTS gems by John Edwards, GO OLT-130. Edwards is a contributing editor of CompuServe Magazine. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,412.

WORLD UPDATE

European Access Improves

The CompuServe European network, the most cost-effective method of accessing the Information Service, offers direct-dial access in 17 cities in addition to the CompuServe nodes in the United States: Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, London, Manchester and Reading in the United Kingdom; Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich and Stuttgart in Germany; and Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, Stockholm and Zurich. There are no communication surcharges when accessing during nonprime time (19:00 to 8:00 weekdays and all day Saturday and Sunday); the prime-time surcharge is \$7.70/hour (8:00 to 19:00 weekdays). Watch this column in coming months for news on additional European nodes. For access numbers, GO LOGON.

CompuServe Information Manager for Windows is available in German- and French-language versions, and can be downloaded from the WinCIM software area (GO WNCIM, part of basic services). WinCIM simplifies and streamlines CompuServe access and performs many functions offline, minimizing connect-time charges. The WinCIM desktop includes an Address Book, In-Basket, Out-Basket and Filing Cabinet to help organize and store information. German and French WinCIM are supported in the WinCIM Support Forum (GO WCIM-SUPPORT).

The Executive News Service (GO ENS) now contains full-text German-language articles from Germany's premier news agency, Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA). The dpa-Kurznachrichtendienst (GO DPA) is part of CompuServe's basic services and contains articles searchable by topic: Schlagzeilen (headlines), Politik (politics), Wirtschaft (industry and commerce), Sport (sports), Kultur (culture), and Vermischtes (miscellaneous).

The Microsoft Sweden Forum (GO MSSWEDEN) puts Swedish-speaking members in touch with Microsoft Sweden's support, product marketing and sales staffs for answers to questions about Microsoft products. Forum libraries contain help files, product data sheets, technical notes, news and information about MS-DOS, Windows and Windows NT, Swedish shareware, programming tools and more.

Words to Purchase By



PAUL FISCH

are the last beta-testers.

Be suspicious of emulation.

No amount of Mondo Cool is worth compatibility hassles.

Avoid proprietary hardware or be willing to pay a high price and encounter upgrade and compatibility problems.

There is more to choosing hardware than benchmarks.

The computer you really want always costs \$5,000. (Credit this one to computer columnist John Dvorak.)

Hardware's useful life is no more than three years.

It's better to build your system than buy it. If you do this, you'll have 24-hour, seven-day on-site support: you. You'll also know more about your machine than most technical support staffs.

A mechanical engineer by training, Cell is head of computer operations for Braselton Crane Works in Braselton, Georgia, and has built several computers for himself and friends.

To learn more about buying a computer, check out Section 7, "Buying a System," in the IBM Hardware Forum (GO IBM-HW).

In the market for a new computer? Before you plunk down a few thousand bucks, consider this advice from CompuServe member Dave Cell, who developed a series of axioms to help buyers through the digital hype:

Choose your software first, and then buy the hardware to run it. The best computer in the world is useless if it doesn't run your software.

Always buy with tomorrow's needs in mind and not just today's.

Hardware always leads software, but software always wants more. Hardware is much like a "snapshot" of the industry at a given point, while software is more like a movie—always changing.

First-generation hardware is expensive and never works right. The first buyers

THE COMM PROGRAM FOR THOSE WHO INSIST ON TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT.

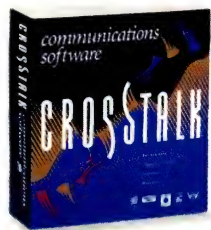
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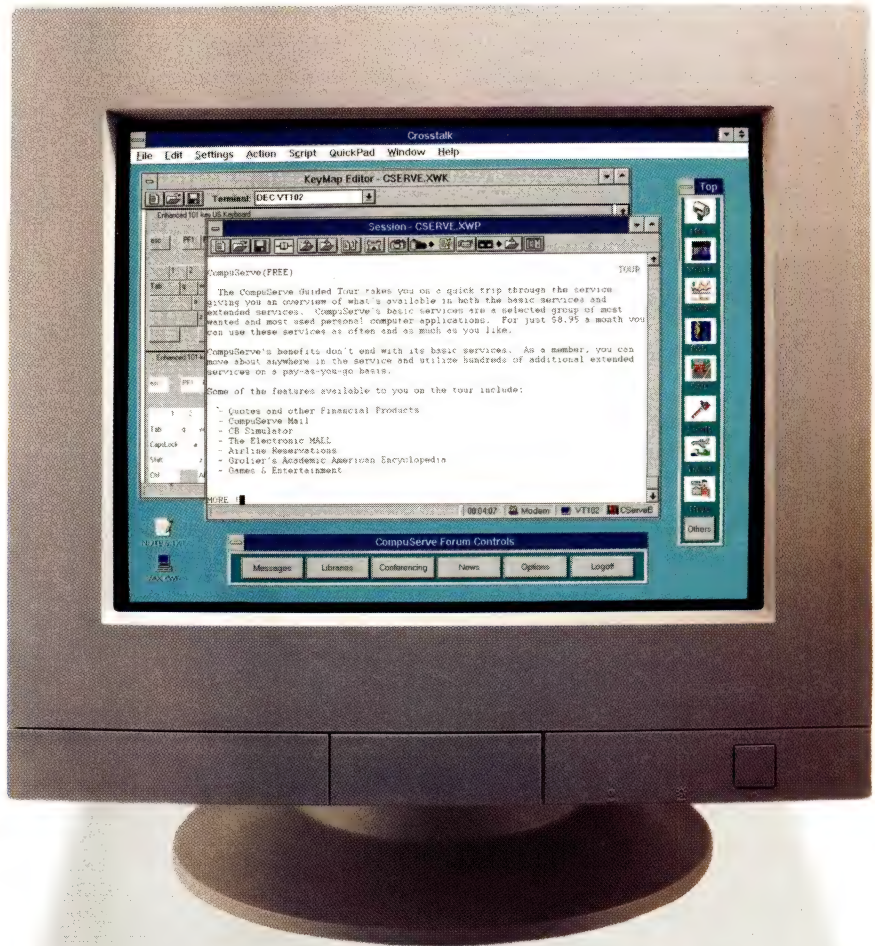


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— PC World Best Buy, November 1993



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GO OLI for more information.

by Cathryn Conroy

Care Takers

**Not content
to leave their
health in others'
hands, the
self-determined
try some
information
therapy.**

Being a good patient in the '90s means more than just doing what your doctor tells you. In a time of managed care, more visits with general practitioners than specialists and tightfisted health-care dollars, being a good patient also means being an informed patient. That involves understanding your health-care options, and that requires information.

"Management of any but the simplest medical problems often involves a number of choices," says John Farrer, M.D., a general practitioner in Sechelt, British Columbia. "There is seldom a clear-cut answer. People can make the right decision only when they have sufficient information."

You don't need to order a subscription to *The New England Journal of Medicine* to be informed. "A well-informed patient is less one who has knowledge of last week's medical news-breaking story than someone who understands science well enough to understand normal and abnormal organ physiology," says Frank W. Meissner, M.D., a cardi-

Cathryn Conroy is senior writer of CompuServe Magazine and book review editor of Online Today. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,417.





JANET WOOLLEY

ologist with the United States Air Force in San Antonio, Texas, and sysop of the Medical Forum (GO MEDSIG). "What I look for from my patients is a dialogue. And that is a function of their intellectual gifts and tools, rather than any specific medical knowledge they may have."

When patients learn the facts of their illnesses, it helps facilitate that patient-doctor dialogue, but Meissner says sick human beings are not necessarily reasonable. "They are usually frightened human beings overwhelmed by illness and its consequences."

Still, understandable medical information can help you make sense of an illness. Gaining that knowledge and using it constructively reduces fear and allows you to make informed decisions with your doctor. It helps you to feel in control of the process and not as if the process is in control of you. It helps you take personal responsibility for your health care and to become an active, participating member of your health-care team.

Where can you get all this knowledge? Your own physician is almost always your best first reference, but when you are ready for more detail and supplemental information, CompuServe is a premier source of



EDWARD CALDWELL

Databases, forum members provided information and support when liver condition caused alarm: Gershik

medical information.

Wanting to take control over his cancer treatment, rather than letting the disease control him, Paul Hansen, the wizop of the Practical Peripherals Forum and an employee of Practical Peripherals Inc., used the medical knowledge he learned on CompuServe as an important weapon in the battle.

Hansen's first inkling that something was wrong came while he was preparing to attend Comdex in Atlanta last spring. He decided he needed medication for nagging back pain that was sure to bother him on the long flight from California. When he dropped into a store-front health-care facility, the routine examination revealed a large mass in his abdomen. This set off a round of tests by his own physician, including an ultrasound exam, CAT scan and a fine needle aspiration biopsy.

Hansen joined the Cancer Forum even before he received an official diagnosis. He took the advice of various members who urged him to take control by assuming an active role in his diagnosis and treatment. He started his research in HealthNet, a consumer health reference library, and Physicians Data Query, a cancer information database for professionals and consumers.

Without practicing medicine online, doctors in the Cancer Forum were able to "translate" for him the medical jargon into common English. Hansen's research led him to the

conclusion that he had retroperitoneal sarcoma, which later was confirmed by his physicians. The prognosis was grim if the mass could not be completely removed surgically.

From his research, Hansen learned this type of cancer was extremely rare, and he required more advanced medical resources than were available in his hometown of Westlake Village, California. Cancer Forum members referred him to the UCLA Surgical Oncology Group and a sarcoma specialist in Los Angeles.

"When you have been diagnosed with cancer, the first reaction is one of total shock. You don't know what to think or even what to ask of the doctors," Hansen says. "The information I gathered on CompuServe helped my wife and me figure out what questions to ask and of whom. It jump-started us into action."

He says his oncologist constantly is surprised by the questions they ask. "I am sure that my being informed has made his job easier in some ways and more difficult in others," Hansen admits, noting that he comes to each appointment armed with a list

of questions and a tape recorder. "But being informed is the only way to successfully function. If you just leave all

the details of 'getting healed' to the doctor, you have not called upon the most important resource available: yourself."

Currently in "round two of the cancer dance," Hansen says his abdominal surgery was successful, although he underwent surgery in the fall for a tumor on the pancreas. Hansen urges all cancer patients to become active participants in their recovery. "Don't just passively accept whatever the health-care industry provides."

Knowledge during a health crisis reduces a very natural fear of the unknown. Patients with hard-to-diagnose illnesses, however, must sometimes wait months for an answer to the most basic question: What is wrong with me? It is here that emotions can wreak havoc on logical decision-making, as that

FEATURE

How Self-Help Might Help Health Care

Health care is in crisis worldwide, and one symptom is a failing health insurance system. As many employers seek new ways to provide insurance without breaking the bank and governments wrestle with their role in the process, the consumer is left wondering who will bear the brunt of high health-care costs.

"No matter where we come from, health care is becoming too expensive," says John Farrer, M.D., a general practitioner in Sechelt, British Columbia. "Whether health care is paid for by governments, insurance companies or out of the pockets of individuals, we are all facing the reality that there are many services that we just cannot afford."

He maintains that to stretch our available health-care resources further, we have to use them more wisely. "Only a well-informed public can intelligently reduce their demands on the health-care system and allow it to continue to work," he insists.

If we are willing to listen, we can learn much from each other across cultural boundaries. Jane Sarasohn-Kahn, a consultant in the health-care industry for a dozen years, works with clients worldwide and says the big problems facing such diverse countries as the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Japan and Germany are virtually the same: health-care cost inflation, an aging population, the high cost of high-technology and perceived high pharmaceutical prices.

"Discussions in health systems the world over use the words 'managed care,' although the implementation of managed care varies from country to country," Sarasohn-Kahn says, noting that the United Kingdom, which has had National Health Services since the 1940s, now is developing internal markets for health care much like the ones discussed by the White House task

force on health-care reform led by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Sarasohn-Kahn advises confused Americans, besieged with seemingly contradictory news reports on health-care reform in the United States, to first figure out how the current system works. "This is no easy task, but CompuServe can help," she says. Online resources include NewsGrid (GO NEWSGRID), the Medical Forum (GOMEDSIG), the Health and Fitness Forum (GO GOODHEALTH) and the White House Forum (GO WHITEHOUSE).

Even without national health-care reform, Sarasohn-Kahn foresees a number of structural changes in the health-care market, including the establishment of physician hospital organizations (or PHOs)—integrated medical systems in which hospitals and physicians jointly assume the financial risk for the care of hospital patients. Managed care organizations, such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs), preferred provider organizations (PPOs) and managed fee for service plans, all will increase because of pressure from commercial insurers who realize their

traditional indemnity business will not exist in a few years. In addition, she predicts that employers will put pressure on health providers to contain costs while maintaining quality care for their employees.

Preparing for changes in the health-care system also requires changes in individual behavior. "Each of us is vested with the responsibility for adopting healthier lifestyles," says Sarasohn-Kahn, including stopping smoking, eating right, drinking in moderation and exercising regularly. "We also have a responsibility to become effective health-care consumers, to become informed and ask questions of our providers."

—CC

emotional response usually is grounded in fear. Steve Gershik, a graduate student at San Francisco State University, went to the student health service two years ago to have his cholesterol level checked. The news was mixed. Although his cholesterol was low, his liver enzymes were 10 times the normal amount. While the enzymes decreased naturally for a while, they soon shot up again.

Just a few months ago, a liver specialist told Gershik that the elevated liver enzymes and iron count probably meant he had contracted one of several rare illnesses, including hemochromatosis; Wilson's disease; hepatitis A, B or C; PBC (an allergy to bile ducts); or some other unknown disease. These vague answers produced frightening questions that Gershik was unable even to articulate to his doctor.

Realizing he needed to learn more, he searched NORD's Rare Disease Database using the keyword LIVER. He learned not only the history of the illnesses and their treatments, but also gathered enough facts to formulate well-informed questions for his physician. He then checked *Consumer Reports Complete Drug Reference as Compiled by the U.S. Pharmacopeia* for possible drug treatments.

"I learned that most of the disorders my doctor had speculated about were rare but treatable, and most important, there were addresses for support organizations I could contact for more specific information," he says.

One of the worst parts of his illness was the waiting—waiting for tests to be performed and the results analyzed. "I was scared," he admits. "I've always been a healthy person, and some of these diseases the doctor speculated about were fatal. Others caused pretty lousy things to happen to the body. I felt alone and needed to see if anyone else was dealing with these illnesses."

Gershik checked into the Health and Fitness Forum and posted two messages asking

'Whether health care is paid for by governments, insurance companies or out of the pockets of individuals, we are all facing the reality that there are many services that we just cannot afford.'

—John Farrer, M.D.

Gene Genie: Predicting Health Genealogically

The first entry in the book *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save Your Life* (UCLA School of Public Health, 1992) is: Find your roots.

Family history does play a major role in health care. For several of the most deadly diseases—heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and numerous types of cancer—heredity is a factor.

"It is estimated that more than one-third of all diseases have a well-documented link to genetics. People should be very concerned about their family's health history," says Joan Kirchman Mitchell, Ph.D., assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Alabama, an instructor in biology and a genealogy expert.

She recommends using genealogical knowledge as a form of preventative medicine. For instance, if you know your family is prone to heart disease, adopt a low-fat diet and exercise regularly. "Know your risks. Understand the disease or condition," she says.

To track your family's medical history,

begin with the current generation. Obtain all pertinent facts, such as the births, marriages and causes of death of your extended family. Then move back generation by generation as far as possible.

Determining causes of death is important. Check obituary notices, diaries, letters and newspaper articles for clues, and don't overlook the family's oral history about illnesses. Although it will be difficult, try to obtain medical records.

Once your research is complete, you can organize the information into a genogram—a family tree that provides an overview of family diseases.

For some additional information on genetics and genealogy, download the file GENETI.ZIP (31,110 bytes) in Library 6, "Text Files," of the Genealogy Forum (GO ROOTS). This is a captured message thread on inherited diseases and tendencies and the effect of genetics and genealogy.

—CC

'It is estimated that more than one-third of all diseases have a well-documented link to genetics. People should be very concerned about their family's health history.'

—Joan Kirchman Mitchell, Ph.D.

adding that he will have to pay close attention to his diet, exercise regularly and limit his alcohol consumption. He advises others to "be informed. The fear and anxiety, even if your illness is a catastrophic one, will be reduced if you know more about what's going on inside your body."

Having that knowledge is the key, but sometimes finding it is difficult. When dealing with a rare disease, even specialists can be stumped. Looking at the quest for knowledge as a puzzle that needs to be solved by the entire health-care team, patient included, can be the answer.

John and Donna Bryan of Cincinnati, Ohio, are working with their health-care team to solve the mystery of the lifelong medical problems of their 12-year-old daughter, Andie. The Bryans had known something wasn't quite right ever since their adopted daughter came to live with them in March 1981 at the age of three months. She suffered from numerous infections and developmental delays. Although they suspected this pattern indicated a deeper, more serious complication, no one knew what it was.

One day the Bryans watched a television special on Fragile X Syndrome, a genetic defect of the X chromosome that causes mild mental retardation. Since so many of the symptoms of Fragile X corresponded to Andie's problems, they gave a tape of the program to their pediatric psychiatrist, who ordered a series of genetic screening tests. The results for Fragile X were negative, but the tests did show that Andie was afflicted with Smith-Magenis Syndrome.

John, who describes himself as "a panic-stricken loon" when it comes to Andie's health, wanted more information than the limited facts the doctors were able to supply. When a search of PaperChase turned up nothing, the Rare Disease Database seemed like the perfect source; however, even here there was no listing for Smith-Magenis Syndrome. Using the electronic feedback feature in NORD, he left a message asking for any

questions about his liver condition. He soon found the support he needed. "I didn't talk to any doctors online, but I didn't need to. I had competent medical advice from my physician. What I wanted was to connect with people who could empathize," he says, noting that the most valuable message he received was from a forum member

who said, "Don't worry. You're not alone. You'll be OK."

FEATURE

As it turns out, that message came true. The results of an October 1993 biopsy proved his iron and copper levels were normal, although there was an excess of liver fat.

"Translation: Nothing serious!" he says,

Holistic Healing: More Than Alternative

Holistic medicine, which looks at the whole person and not the sum of the organ systems, is another medical resource that its supporters view as a complement to traditional medicine. While mainstream medicine uses approved treatments, holistic providers are more willing to take risks.

The new Holistic Health Forum (GO HOLISTIC) centers on these developing medical options, with sections and libraries devoted to holistic medicine, vitamins and minerals, herbs and plants, homeopathy, Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, massage and bodywork, diet and exercise, the mind/body link and more.

"On one side there are people who only want drugs and surgery, and on the other are people who believe that crystals under their pillow will cure," says Skye Lininger, forum sysop and a chiropractic physician in Portland, Oregon. "I see holistic medicine as a middle ground, and this is the progress

area."

Lininger says people turn to holistic medicine out of frustration. "If you have a car that needs oil, you add it. But if you wait too long, the engine is damaged and adding oil won't do any good. What we are often doing in medicine is adding oil when the engine is damaged," he says.

Holistic health care is fast becoming a popular option. *The New England Journal of Medicine* (Jan. 28, 1993) reports that in 1990 U.S. patients made an estimated 425 million visits to unconventional therapists, while only 388 million visits were paid to primary-care physicians. Most of those fees to unconventional therapists were not covered by insurance.

"When people have a choice, they are making a choice for variety," says Lininger. "Holistic methods are as good or better than mainstream medicine."

—CC

information that might be available on SMS. NORD researcher Joy Yacolucci went to work and located several articles.

"It's got to be a pretty rare disease to stump the Rare Disease Database," says John, who appreciates the information NORD was able to find for them. The Bryans learned that SMS is an extremely rare genetic problem that usually occurs because of missing genetic material on the 17th chromosome.

At the time of Andie's diagnosis in mid-1993, only 16 cases of SMS had been identified worldwide. Its symptoms include developmental delay, speech delay, mental retardation, unusual facial features, sleep difficulties, hyperactivity and frequent infections.

Treatment of SMS also is limited. Medication can be administered for sleep problems and hyperactivity, and special education classes can maximize a child's learning potential. In a natural give and take, both the Bryans and their physician share with one another each new fact uncovered about the disease.

"I've always taken the position that what I fear out of ignorance is twice as bad as the facts could ever be," says John. "So far, that's been the case. My advice is to leave no stone unturned."

Depending on the condition, it is sometimes up to you, and not just your doctor, to pursue a diagnosis. That takes perseverance, a belief in yourself and lots of information to logically direct your search. Steve Grasmann of Addison, Texas, used such information to diagnose what he thought was his problem: Attention Deficit Disorder.

About a year ago, Grasmann realized that the reason he never had been able to concentrate or stick to a task wasn't that he was inherently lazy, as he always had been told, but rather that he suffered from ADD. Although common in children, ADD is relatively rare in adults. It is generally believed that kids outgrow ADD, but doctors now are

JANET WOOLLEY



What's Up, Doc? Asking Online

CHRIS STAPLES



Doctor in the Medical Forum helps make sense of prescriptions and diagnoses: Dr. Farrer

Although discussing health-care concerns with your own physician is the best way to begin taking care of yourself, you also can find information and clarification from doctors online.

One of the best places to find a doctor in the house is in the Medical Forum (GO MEDSIG). Although personal medical advice is *never* given online, members often use this area to learn more in general about a diagnosis or medication already prescribed by a personal physician. What forum doctors *can* do is help "translate" medical jargon into understandable language and serve as a solid resource for insights and analysis of breaking medical news stories.

"The advice we give online has to be fairly general and is usually with the disclaimer that only the person's regular physician is in the right position to prescribe treatment," says John Farrer, M.D., Medsig assistant sysop and a general practitioner in Sechelt, British Columbia. "Having said

that, I think many have been helped in the forum. Some medical problems can be very difficult to understand, and the explanation of Medsig physicians can be very helpful in putting the matter into a digestible perspective."

What medical questions are appropriate to ask online? Farrer recommends questions that begin like these:

"I have been told I have ... , and I don't know what to expect."

"How do I find the right physician to treat my ... ?"

"My sister has What sort of things will she be going through?"

Unlike your own physician, Medsig doctors can't listen to your heart, consult your charts or order tests. They can't diagnose online, but they are willing to share their expertise to help others better understand the complex world of medicine.

—CC

realizing this isn't always the case.

Grasman first turned to his general practitioner, who agreed with his assessment and prescribed Ritalin, the drug of choice for treating ADD. After suffering severe side effects, Grasman discontinued the drug and was told by his GP he would need to see a psychiatrist for further treatment.

Uninsured and unemployed after being laid off by a major computer company, Grasman knew he needed help regardless of the cost. What frustrated him was that it took visits to five different psychiatrists before one was able to treat him. Through his five-month quest for a doctor who would acknowledge that adults have ADD, Grasman was depressed and alone. After searching Health Database Plus and PaperChase, he realized the medical literature supported his theories of adult ADD. It was only then that he knew others shared his problem.

From the online research, he learned what he always believed in his heart: He just functioned differently. For instance, his fidgeting in a business meeting—doodling and fiddling with papers—was his way of concentrating on what was being said. However, his constant movements were interpreted by others in the room as just the opposite. Grasman says his job reviews were consistently poor based more on perceptions of his behavior than his actual job performance.

"I process information differently. It's not less valid, just different," he explains, noting that the research made him realize he could cope with ADD because many other adults were coping.

Finally, with his stack of research in hand, he found a doctor last May who confirmed his ADD diagnosis and was able to treat him with medication that works. Without insurance, it cost him \$600 of his own money to get that far.

Also in May, he joined the new ADD Forum which, he says, "validated me. Until then, no one had been able to relate to my life story. I can talk with people there, and they

The Four Research Steps

If you have a medical concern, the first place you should turn is your personal physician for a diagnosis and health-care advice. But when you want to learn more about a diagnosed medical condition, tap CompuServe's resources using this research ladder:

1. Talk to others about your illness or concern. Just as you would turn to friends and family to talk about an illness, expand your sources in a forum where knowledgeable discussion takes place. Sometimes, this will be obvious—diabetes in the Diabetes Forum or cancer in the Cancer Forum. Other times, you may have to think a little. For example, need to change your diet? Check out the Cooks Online Forum. Concerned about an illness related to the environment? Seek out the experts in the SafetyNet Forum.

2. Research the basics. Find basic information written for the layperson in easy-to-

understand language in HealthNet, *Consumer Reports Complete Drug Reference* as Compiled by the U.S. Pharmacopeia, *Academic American Encyclopedia* and many forum libraries.

3. Get technical. Once you understand the basics, conduct more advanced and medically technical research in such areas as NORD's Rare Disease Database, PaperChase, IQuest Medical InfoCenter, Knowledge Index, Health Database Plus and Physicians Data Query.

4. Search for understanding. Since much of the advanced research is written for those with medical training, some of your findings may produce more questions than answers. Seek to understand your research. Return to the forums and your own physician for help in comprehending medical terms and jargon and to evaluate the quality of your findings.

—CC

know what I am saying," he explains. "It's a dose of sanity in what has been an insane world for me."

He encourages others with mysterious illnesses to be patient. "Be educated, and don't believe in miracle cures that aren't there. Take a level-headed approach and have faith the answers will come."

Grasmann pursued help long enough to actually find it. He knew it was up to him to find the medical care he needed.

Taking that responsibility requires personal discipline, something patients with chronic illnesses learn quickly when they must endure strict regimens to remain healthy. Sometimes, however, it's easier to deny the trouble exists, and that can lead to major medical problems.

Marc Ressler, who was diagnosed with diabetes in 1980, didn't take personal responsibility for his health until he fully understood the disease and the effect it had on him. When first told he had the illness, Ressler was given a laundry list of potential complications—kidney problems, damage to the nerves of the feet, blocked arteries and coronary artery disease. An electronic engineer with Maryland's Army Research Laboratory, he did what the doctor told him—at first. He lost 80 pounds and took his medication. In one year, Ressler was well enough to forego the drugs. But as the years went by, he stopped seeing the doctor and gained back the weight, peaking at 283 pounds in 1991. "I was in severe denial," he admits.

An accident in June 1992 probably saved his life. Forced to go to the hospital for stitches, Ressler developed a severe infection in his leg, attributable to the diabetes. The hospital realized that his blood sugar was out of control. A member of a health maintenance organization, Ressler was given a strict diet

and exercise regimen and much medication. It worked. He is now down to 210 pounds and off the drugs but is suffering from coronary artery disease and kidney problems because of the diabetes.

Ressler has become an expert on his disease. "This knowledge has empowered me. I was told I would probably

Used IQuest, PaperChase to find cure for an irregular heartbeat when medications didn't work: Manke

FEATURE



Online Medical and Health Resources

CompuServe's health-care and medical resources offer a wide variety of information for consumers and physicians.

RESEARCH DATABASES: BASIC SERVICES

Consumer Reports Complete Drug Reference as Compiled by the U.S. Pharmacopeia (GO DRUGS)

—This database contains general information about the correct use of any medicine, as well as individual entries on a wide variety of drugs. Search by the generic or brand name.

HealthNet (GO HNT)—Ideal for consumers, this reference library of health, medical and sports medicine information is concise but comprehensive enough to answer most questions on a given topic. Search by disease, symptoms, drugs, surgeries or tests and more.

RESEARCH DATABASES: EXTENDED SERVICES

AIDS News Clips (GO AIDSNEWS)—Updated throughout the day, this is a listing of news reports on AIDS supplied by The Associated Press, Reuters, United Press International and The Washington Post.

Handicapped Users' Database (GO HANDICAPPED)—This database offers information on software, hardware, organizations, news, research and development and a reference library devoted to the handicapped.

Human Sexuality Databank (GO HSX)—A compendium of general information on urology, gynecology, psychiatry and other fields of sexual medicine and therapy, this area offers a search-

able databank as well as support groups and forums.

Information USA/Health (GO INFOUSA)—Select Option 13, "Free Health Information and Care," from the main menu to learn more about the free and up-to-date health information resources of the U.S. government.

Rare Disease Database (GO NORD)—Sponsored by the National Organization for Rare Disorders, this database offers detailed information on rare diseases, including symptoms, causes, standard and investigational therapies and other resources.

Search tips: Check the NORD index for the spelling of diseases. Use the singular version of the word (Huntington rather than Huntington's, for instance), and first try searches with common names, such as Lupus instead of Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.

RESEARCH DATABASES: EXTENDED SERVICES WITH SURCHARGES

CCML AIDS Articles (GO CCMLAIDS)—This database of full-text AIDS-related articles from the Comprehensive Core Medical Library offers resources from leading medical reference books, textbooks and general medical journals.

Surcharge: Each search (retrieves up to 10 titles) is \$5; additional titles (in groups of 10) are \$5; full articles (selected from the titles) are \$5 each.

Health Database Plus (GO HLTDB)—Designed for consumers, this database offers articles from consumer and professional publications on topics relating to all areas of health, fitness and

nutrition, as well as health-care politics. Coverage begins with January 1989.

Surcharge: \$1.50 for each full-text article viewed or download; \$1 for each abstract viewed or downloaded.

IQuest Medical InfoCenter (GO IQMEDICINE)—Comprehensive access to the most important medical, pharmaceutical and allied health databases is offered, including AIDS Weekly, Allied and Alternative Medicine, Cancer Research Weekly, Combined Health Information Database and MEDLINE.

Surcharges: SmartSCANS are \$5 each; general searches are \$9 each with database surcharges that range from \$2 to \$75. Detailed information on surcharges is available from Option 3, "Pricing," from the main IQuest Medical InfoCenter menu.

Search tips: Choose one of two search methods: Multi-Database SmartSCANS or a single database search. The former allows you to scan a group of databases to find the most appropriate sources of information for your topic. IQuest determines which databases have articles on your topic and then allows you to pick one or more databases to view results. A single database search allows you to perform your search in a database of your choosing that you already know covers your area of interest.

One unique feature of IQuest is its SOS service, which is the real-time, one-on-one help of an information specialist. Type SOS at any prompt, and you'll be greeted by the trained researcher. Type in your question or problem, being as specific as possible, and you'll receive expert searching advice. There is no charge beyond regular connect-time fees for SOS.

be on dialysis in five years, which led to my resolve to try to do something to avoid that," he says.

Diet and exercise information in the Diabetes and Health and Fitness forums helped him understand how his body responds to certain foods, which Ressler credits with his weight loss. Faithfully reading almost every message posted in the Diabetes Forum and studying many of the library files has broken old myths and helped him understand the details of his illness, leading Ressler to believe he now knows more about diabetes than his general practitioner.

Unless he is prepared with questions when he sees his doctor, Ressler finds he may just be handed a prescription, given instructions and sent on his way with no explanation of the "why" and "how" of his illness. "I have discovered that in the HMO environment, where the clock is ticking on your appointment the moment the previous pa-

tient leaves, being able to speak some of the language and ask intelligent questions of your health provider team leads to further dialogue," he says.

"The information I have learned on CompuServe has made me more informed so I can ask more and better questions," he explains. Ressler often brings copies of Diabetes Forum messages to his appointments to discuss new treatments with his doctor. "I am a real part of my own health support team," he says.

This is perhaps the ultimate benefit of the power of information: being an active part of your health-care team. As health-care reform efforts worldwide favor managed care, more people will find themselves in health maintenance organizations. HMOs work well financially because they are cost-effective for the insurance provider, the employer and the patient. Since they rely largely on the skills

of general practitioners rather than specialists, costs are reduced. However, as Allison Manke learned, those with unusual conditions or illnesses may receive better care from their HMOs when they can provide their doctor with specialized information.

Manke, co-owner of Video Imagination, a video production company in Hamden, Connecticut, must pay her own health-care premiums and prefers the lower cost of an HMO. But unlike most thirtysomething women, Manke has endured a heart arrhythmia since she was a child.

Periodic attacks in which her heart suddenly starts beating between 160 and 225 times a minute have increased in frequency and intensity as she has gotten older. Three years ago, Manke suffered an attack so severe she was rushed to the emergency room, where an intravenous shot of adenosine was needed to stop it.

FEATURE

Knowledge Index (GO KI)—This service offers weekend and evening access only to a large number of medical and pharmaceutical databases at reduced rates. Databases include Cancer-Lit, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, Merck Index Online, PsycINFO, Mental Health Abstracts and more. Surcharge: \$24/hour or 40 cents/minute.

Search tips: Two search methods are offered, Menu and Command; beginners should use the Menu option, which will guide you along each step of the process.

Magazine Database Plus (GO MAGDB)—Full-text articles from more than 130 general-interest magazines, journals and reports are offered. Coverage begins with January 1986. Surcharge: \$1.50 for each article viewed on-screen or downloaded to your computer.

National Technical Information Service (GO NTIS)—This database offers references to articles from government-sponsored research, development and engineering reports.

Surcharge: Each search (retrieves up to 10 titles) is \$2; additional titles (in groups of 10) are \$2; full references (selected from the titles) are \$2 each.

PaperChase (GO PAPERCHASE)—This database offers easy-to-use, menu-driven access to the world's largest biomedical database, MEDLINE. Prepared by the National Library of Medicine, MEDLINE contains more than 8 million references to articles from 4,000 journals. Surcharge: \$18/hour from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. your local time weekdays and any time during weekends; \$24/hour 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. your local time weekdays.

Search tips: This is a user-friendly, menu-

driven system. Complete search instructions are online in the main menu, Option 2, "PaperChase Help—Read this First!"

Physicians Data Query (GO PDQ)—This service is comprised of four separate databases: the two Cancer Information Files (professional and consumer), Directory File and Protocol File. The Consumer Cancer Information File contains material for the layperson covering more than 80 cancer types. Information on treatment alternatives, stage expectations and general prognoses is provided. Search by entering the cancer name (a list of names is available).

Surcharge: Ranges from \$2 to \$7.50 for each search depending on database. Detailed pricing information is in Option 3, "Pricing Information."

Search tips: Use the list of cancer names and note the correct form for searching, although it is acceptable to search with such generic phrases as "brain tumor."

PsycINFO—Psychological Abstracts (GO PSYCIN)—Containing article abstracts on psychology and the behavioral sciences, this database covers the fields of applied, developmental, general and experimental psychology and more.

Surcharge: \$5 for each search (retrieves up to 10 titles); additional titles (in groups of 10) are \$5; full abstracts (selected from the titles) are \$5 each.

Search tips: Search by subject, author, language or publication year. Enter a name, word or phrase identifying the person, place or thing you are searching. You can narrow the search by adding criteria. Completed searches will show the titles of up to 10 records with a menu of possible actions. Additional titles can be viewed in groups of 10, which will result in additional

charges.

FORUMS:

The following forums offer information on medical and health issues:

Attention Deficit Disorder Forum (GO ADD)

Cancer Forum (GO CANCER)

Diabetes Forum (GO DIABETES)

Disabilities Forum (GO DISABILITIES)

Florida Today Forum (GO FLATODAY), Section and Library 11, "Health Fitness"

Health & Fitness Forum (GO GOODHEALTH)

Holistic Health Forum (GO HOLISTIC)

Medical Forum (GO MEDSIG)

New Age Forum (GO NEWAGE), Section 17, "Diet/Herbs/Health," and Library 9, "New Age Health"

SafetyNet Forum (GO SAFETYNET)

Scuba Forum (GO SCUBA), Section and Library 11, "Diving Medicine"

Seniors Forum (GO SENIORS), Section and Library 6, "Health/Medicare."

—CC

She learned she had supraventricular tachycardia, and her physician prescribed beta blockers. But the medication didn't work, and the number of attacks increased. Each one seemed to be worse than the one before and usually landed her back in the emergency room for another shot of adenosine. The bouts also were taking an emotional toll as Manke started feeling a sense of impending doom, as if she were dying.

Manke received her doctor's blessing to begin looking for a solution—a real cure, not just more medication that didn't work. She searched PaperChase and IQuest's medical databases and was astounded by the depth of information on SVT.

"Unfortunately, the most current research indicated that unless the SVT attacks were more severe than mine, nothing much could be done within a reasonable risk-to-benefit ratio," she says. The only cure carried

great risks: a surgical procedure that was being used with some success but was so dangerous many patients required pacemakers as a result.

But Manke didn't give up. She kept checking PaperChase and IQuest, and within a few months, she found preliminary research on a technique that was based on the surgery already in use but was far safer. She downloaded the article and shared it with her physician.

"As a fan of HMOs, I know that cost-effective treatment is one of the ways we keep our premiums down. I also know there is no such thing as cheap surgery," says Manke, noting her medication costs about \$20 a month, and the surgery would cost tens of thousands of dollars. More online research, however, turned up an article that clearly demonstrated that the surgical procedure for a young person was more cost-effective over a lifetime than medication and

frequent emergency room visits.

With research in hand, she convinced her physician and HMO that the surgery was no longer experimental and would be cost-effective. A second opinion by a doctor at Yale-New Haven Hospital confirmed that Manke was a good candidate for the surgery.

During the procedure, catheters were inserted in the chambers of her heart, and the extra pathways were located. With a tiny burst of radio frequency energy, those pathways were ablated or burned. Manke was cured. She has no need for medication and has suffered no further episodes of tachycardia.

"CompuServe allowed me to become a far more active and informed participant in making decisions about my medical care," she says. "My philosophy has always been that health-care practitioners don't take care of me. They help me take care of myself."





14.4's Speed Bumps

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▼
Speedy Solutions for Speedy Modems

▼
How Fast in the Future? p. 22

▼
Hard-Disk Whatdunits, p. 26

► **Those hitting the data highway with faster modems smooth over compatibility and other potholes.**

When it comes to high-speed modems, business consultant Terry Straehley admits he has a complicated setup.

He has a data/voice/fax switch in his office connected to two modems and to one phone line. With one of the modems connected, a Megahertz 14,400-bps model, a hum disturbs his second phone line. If a modem is connected while his two computers are transferring files via cable, the other phone line won't ring.

Straehley, of Santa Barbara, California, finally got all this to work, but it took the combined efforts of two vendor forum sysops and other knowledgeable members of the Megahertz section of the Modem Vendor Forum (GOMODEM-VENDOR). Now, says Straehley, "I use the Megahertz modem at high speeds for downloading files at 14,400 bps over CompuServe 800-number lines, with nary a hiccup."

While Straehley's setup is more complex than most, it's not unusual for owners of high-speed modems to face con-

figuration and compatibility problems. Like Straehley, these users often find help in CompuServe's vendor and other forums (see "Modem Support Forums," p. 24).

Computer programmer Wayne Fulton offers voluntary help in the Practical Peripherals Forum (GO PPIFORUM). He finds CompuServe "a wonderful place to obtain modem support from both the modem companies and from other users. Members are interested in modems, and there's a lot of available knowledge."

Stephen Schwartz, vice president of a consulting environmental engineering company in Westchester County, New York, uses his Supra 14,400-bps modem with his Macintosh LCIII to do online banking, connect with bulletin boards and explore CompuServe. "Connecting at 9600 bps is no problem, but 14.4K is another story," he reports. "Line noise is a continuing problem with some bulletin boards. I can always force a 9600-bps connection, but obviously I'm not thrilled to give up speed that I've paid for."

Michael Naver of Baltimore, Maryland, is a contributing editor of CompuServe Magazine and a free-lance writer on technology applications for business. His CompuServe User ID number is 76004,2242.



ROY WIEMANN

14.4 Access: Where and Why

Connecting with CompuServe at the speed of 14,400 bps is now a reality in several U.S. cities. Connect-time charges are the same as for 9600-bps access—\$16/hour on the standard plan, \$22.80/hour on the alternate plan.

Some of the cities that have this new service include Los Angeles, Newport Beach and Santa Clara, in California; Orlando, Florida; Chicago; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Rochelle Park, New Jersey; New York City; Columbus, Ohio; and Philadelphia. More cities are being added monthly. Check GO PHONES and GO RATES to see if high-speed CompuServe access is available in your locality. CompuServe also provides surcharged 800-number service for 14,400-bps access.

Connecting at 14,400 bps will be available worldwide in the near future. The fastest access now available—9600 bps—is in effect in more than 30 cities outside the United States, in addition to nearly 200 U.S. cities.

What's the advantage of high-speed access? You save online connect-time charges for many of your CompuServe activities, especially when you download large files from forums. The 50

percent increase in speed your data travels at 14,400 bps compared to 9600 bps means you save dollars.

For example, the time and cost of downloading a 1MB file at 9600 bps under the standard plan are 17 minutes and \$4.50. At 14,400 bps, the time drops to about 11 minutes and the cost to \$3. You also see savings in your other CompuServe activities, such as running a Windows Navigator session.

Wayne Fulton, a member of the Practical Peripherals Forum, recommends standard software settings for 14,400-bps communications as follows:

- ▶ Software speed set higher than your modem's rated speed. For example, choose 19.2K bps with a 14.4K-bps modem.
- ▶ Use "hardware flow control"; disable "software flow control (XON/XOFF)."
- ▶ Turn off any "auto-baud" feature; conversely, turn on any "lock-baud" feature.

—MN

Schwartz also had trouble making a 14,400-bps CompuServe connection using his Navigator auto-access software. "Connecting with Navigator required a different modem initialization string than I usually use," he says.

He got helpful advice from several sources: the Macintosh Communications Forum (GO MACCOM), the Supra section of the Modem Vendor Forum and the Navigator Support Forum (GO NAVSUP), where he learned how to change his modem initialization string.

An expert user who monitors the Supra section is Bill Pierce, systems administrator for an Iowa company. Pierce noticed that users such as Schwartz were having problems with line noise using high-speed modems that did not occur with slower ones. He began to chime in with suggestions, such as advising members to make sure their initialization strings are optimized according to the manufacturer's guidelines. He also tells members to be sure their modems have the most current ROM, since manufacturers sometimes release updated ROM chips to fix problems in previous versions and improve performance.

Minneapolis executive Todd J. Larson

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Coming Speed Hikes—19, 24, 28 ...

"I'm running as fast as I can" might be the cry of modem makers who plan to market modems of even faster signaling speeds than today's 14,400 bps.

The next modem standard is likely to be 28,800 bps, twice today's speed. The international telecommunications standards group, ITU-TSS, is expected to issue this new standard later this year. Modems adopting it will come on the market in 1995.

Meanwhile, hardware makers are falling into line behind one or more interim, proprietary high-speed protocols. These are the 19,200-bps V.TERBO standard developed by AT&T, and the 24,400- and 28,800-bps proprietary V.FAST-class protocol developed by chip set maker Rockwell Inc.

These higher speeds have their uses, vendors say. "We need modems to be as fast as possible to save phone line costs, our time and the computer's time," notes Terry Manning, marketing director for Zoom Telephonics. "Also, the faster the modem, the more types of files and the longer the files you are likely to transmit."

So does it make sense now to upgrade your modem to a speed above 14.4K bps? Yes and no. "As long as the high-speed standard is proprietary, it means the guy on the other end has to have the same modem as you," notes Paul Hansen, sysop of the Practical Peripherals Forum (GO PPIFORUM).

This works best, Hansen adds, "where you have a corporate commitment to move data from one branch office to another." But for the CompuServe member, there's no payoff yet for the faster protocols; CompuServe supports these protocols, but the fastest connection currently available is 14.4K bps.

Other modem vendors agree that modems for the home and small business will remain at 14.4K bps speed in the short term. "There will be a significant length of time before all users have a

28.8K-bps data, voice and fax modem," predicts Kimberly Price, product manager of the USRobotics consumer group. "But the corporate market will move to 28.8K bps in the next few months."

To satisfy these users, more than 100 modem manufacturers are expected to buy into the proprietary 24.4K- and 28.8K-bps V.FAST-class protocol. "When the international standard comes in later, the makers should have an easy progression to that standard," Hansen explains. For example, USRobotics plans a modem "daughterboard" swap to increase speed from 14.4K to 28.8K. Supra Corp. and Zoom plan 24.4K-bps V.FAST-class modems and 19.2K V.TERBO models.

Another approach to greater modem speed is a "soft modem." Digicom Corp. markets a modem board that can be upgraded to 19.2K V.TERBO through software. The software "effectively downloads the modem personality into the board's RAM," explains Jay Blazensky, Digicom's director of marketing.

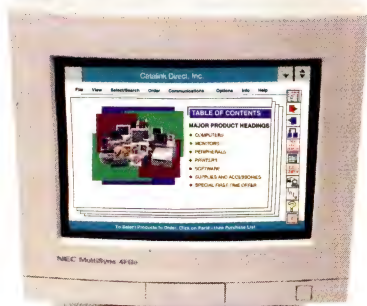
Blazensky believes modem technology is "shifting from companies that make chip sets to suppliers of general-purpose signaling equipment. With software upgrades, our users don't worry about obsolescence."

Most experts believe that transfer of uncompressed data in speed ranges of 28.8K will require a change from analog to digital phone lines through the adoption of ISDN (Integrated Systems Digital Networks). The ISDN protocol is just coming into use for some corporations but is seen as years away from general use.

ELSA GmbH, a German modem manufacturer, offers an ISDN PC card that Gerald List, managing director, says is "much faster than analog modems," yielding speeds up to 34K bps. Information about the company's ISDN products is available in the German-language ELSA GmbH Forum (GO ELSA).

—MN

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was having trouble getting good connections with his 9600-bps Cardinal modem. He uses OzCIS, an auto-access program for PCs, so the IBM Communications Forum (GO IBM-COM), where OzCIS is supported, was a natural place to go for solutions. There he learned the proper modem settings for error correction, data compression and modem initialization from expert user Cam Castiglia.

Castiglia, a materials manager at a South Florida manufacturing facility, has been offering this kind of help in the forum since he discovered OzCIS, now his CompuServe access software of choice. "As time went on, I noticed that many users had difficulty with modem configuration," he recalls. "I started jumping in with easy answers to easy questions. Before I knew it, I had been proclaimed 'Dr. Modem.' Both the questions and answers have become more difficult, but I very much enjoy the challenge."

Castiglia estimates that he posts between 750 and 1,000 messages a month in the forum. A common problem he frequently resolves is dropped or garbled characters. This, he says, is caused by improper flow control settings when using an ASCII-based navigator such as OzCIS. Castiglia helps members enable the software's flow control initialization strings by telling them what to change.

Despite the best efforts of people like Pierce and Castiglia, there are times when nothing works. British technology consultant Mike Maughan, who travels widely in Europe and the United States, was having trouble with communications on his IBM ThinkPad notebook PC. His original portable 9600-bps fax/14.4-bps data modem kept "going to sleep," and he finally had to replace it with an internal 9600-bps fax/14.4-data modem. The new one "seems to be totally integrated with the ThinkPad and has so far given me no problems."

Hardware compatibility also can be troublesome. Douglas Vargas, manager of the Zoom Telephonics section of the Modem Vendor Forum, finds this problem more common with internal than with external modems. "That's because the serial port is not likely to conflict with any other serial device; therefore, anything connected to it should be ready to go."

Internal modems, on the other hand, can be configured with different port addresses, so the user must be careful that the port address or the "IRQ" address will not be



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Modem Support Forums

Crosstalk Forum (GO XTALK)—Supports Crosstalk XVI, Crosstalk Mark 4 and XTALK Communicator. Libraries offer DOS and Windows utilities.

Datastorm Forum (GO DATASTORM)—Support for DOS and Windows versions of Procomm Plus and Procomm, including help with "aspect" scripts.

ELSA GmbH Forum (GO ELSA)—German-language forum supporting the large German manufacturer of modems, communications software, graphics cards and monitors.

Hayes Forum (GO HAYFORUM)—Offers product descriptions, upgrade information and third-party product information supporting Hayes modems.

IBM Communications Forum (GO IBMCOM)—Answers provided to a variety of hardware and software questions regarding PC data and fax communications, plus support for Autosig and OzCIS.

Macintosh Communications Forum (GO MACCOM)—Scripts, tools and utilities for Macintosh modem communications, plus a section for CompuServe Navigator for the Macintosh.

Modem Vendor Forum (GO MODEMVENDOR)—Libraries contain fixes and help files from vendors, including Boca Research, Complete PC, Computer Peripherals, Global Village Communications, Megahertz, Multitech, National Semiconductor, PSI Integration, Supra

Corp., Telebit, USRobotics, Zoom Telephonics and ZyXEL.

Practical Peripherals Forum (GO PPFORUM)—Supports the full product line of Practical Peripherals modems, including low-speed, high-speed and fax modems, and hardware print buffers.

TAPCIS Forum (GO TAPCIS)—Libraries provide scripts, tools and add-ons for TAPCIS, along with problem reports and suggested fixes.

Telecommunications Issues Forum (GO TELECOM)—Focus is on new telecommunications technologies and services, including cellular, mobile paging, ISDN, networking and voice processing.

shared with another device. Several diagnostic programs are available to help the user keep track of PC device addresses, such as Modem Doctor, a shareware program that's available in the Practical Peripherals Forum, Library 3, "General Utilities," as file MDR52.EXE. Fulton advises: Don't assign your mouse and your internal modem to COM1 and COM3, since both use the same interrupt.

Most 14,400-bps modems have both data and fax capability, but getting the two functions to work together can cause problems. In response, modem vendors are marketing hardware and software solutions.

"Data communications functions are usually standardized, so they'll generally work with any communication software," notes

Zoom's Vargas. "Fax functions are not so standardized—there are several types of fax modem designs, each requiring specific fax software. Therefore the user can't simply obtain any fax program and expect it to work the way you can with communications software." Adds Paul Hansen, manager of the Practical Peripherals Forum, "You can't have both data and fax software controlling the same port at the same time."

In addition, vendor solutions vary. Zoom has a "distinctive ring" function built into its new modems. "The hardware deciphers the ring cadence and can tell the software what type of call is coming in, voice, data or fax," Vargas explains. He expects software to be developed soon to enable this feature.

Supra plans a modem called the "desktop communicator" that will come with bundled software to handle data, fax and voice. Practical Peripherals modems come bundled with a product called QuickLink II, from Smith Micro Co., which integrates fax and data communications for Windows users.

In helping buyers get the most from their products, modem vendors stress the importance of reading the manuals. "Most manuals have a troubleshooting section that users should check first before calling for help," notes Kimberly Price, USRobotics product manager. "You run into compatibility problems because hardware and software vendors do things differently."

Hansen agrees. "You need to read the manual. It would be wonderful if you had total 'plug and play' with modems, but the only way to get that is if everyone is marching to the same drummer. That's the argument for standards."

While higher speeds and added features bring new challenges, the good news for modem users who face configuration or compatibility problems, today and in the future, is that CompuServe's vendor reps and expert forum users always are ready to lend a helping hand. ☐

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Hard Disk Mysteries

► Have yourself a mad platter? 'Spin' doctors online can help diagnose.

Hard disk problems can trip up even the savviest computer user. And as Eric King of Perris, California, found out, solving them can be maddening.

King's computer, a DOS machine running Microsoft Windows, began making noises one day. The beeping and buzzing coming out of the PC's speaker seemed to be synchronized to the operations of the hard disk. King suspected a virus, but a diagnostic run with antiviral software showed nothing.

Fortunately, the IBM Hardware Forum (GO IBMHW) boasts a message section devoted to hard disks and their maladies. Hoping to tap this pool of talent, King left a message outlining his problem. He also posted his AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files; these small but critical text files determine a computer's configuration, and King realized they would be necessary for any troubleshooting.

It wasn't long thereafter that help arrived in the form of Symantec Utilities Forum Sysop John Boyd. Looking over the system files, Boyd saw that King was loading a program that moves deleted files into a hidden directory, to guard against accidental deletion. Boyd suspected a corrupted control file. Acting on Boyd's feedback, King used a utility program, PC Tools, to delete the directory in question. "I then created another directory with the same name," King recalls, "rebooted, and the problem was solved."

Buzzing and beeping as the result of a hidden file? It sounds unusual, but regulars in the IBM Hardware and the Macintosh Hardware (GO MACHW) forums have come to expect the unexpected. Hard disks are more reliable today than ever before, but they remain complicated devices that must be approached with care. A drive whose alignment or speed settings move out of normal specifications may act unusually, or it may refuse to run at all. A sudden shock can cause a disk head to strike a spinning platter, destroying data.

And then there are the seemingly innocuous actions that result in calamity. Jeffrey M. Feldman had the best of intentions when he decided to connect an external tape backup drive to his Macintosh IIfx; backups, after all, are a critical part of computing because they preserve your data in case disaster strikes. But the New Jersey-based anesthesiologist

made one mistake: He plugged his backup drive into the appropriate port while the Mac was running. The result was a damaged controller board, diagnosed through the help of the Mac Hardware Forum.

With complete loss of access to his hard drive, Feldman needed to know whether the data on the disk could be saved, and whether the fault was his or the result of a bad backup drive. Answers were quick to come, but they were painful. "I subsequently decided to replace the disk since the cost for data recovery exceeded the replacement value," Feldman says. "If I had important information on the hard disk without other copies, the cost of data recovery would not have been past consideration." As for the

manufacturer can solve the problem, but they should be tried only after a complete backup of all data.

No words are more common in the various hardware forums than advice to back up hard disks frequently, no matter what glitches have surfaced. Steve Holley reinforced the point recently with an account of a network server machine whose problems were exceedingly hard to catch before it was too late. A programmer and computer specialist for a medium-sized law firm in Barnwell, South Carolina, Holley had set up an AST '486 machine with a 500MB hard disk running Novell's NetWare as its system software. Testing the machine before putting it into full use, Holley began to experience a series of inexplicable problems.

The symptoms were hard to miss; the server would drop offline and require a reboot before it would return to normal operation. A system error log failed to implicate the hard disk, but, finally, the machine refused to boot altogether. Holley's messages in the IBM Hardware Forum resulted in a firm conclusion: The disk was damaged and would have to be sent to a data-recovery specialist. "This is about the worst thing that can happen, and it is a perfect example of why everyone should back up frequently," Holley says. "If I had backed up, this would not matter, and I could just let the warranty replace the drive. Instead, the problem threw my work schedule for the week helter-skelter."

If a failing hard disk can conceal its woes until it's too late for recovery, some disks go even further—they conceal their very existence. The user looks at a newly installed disk and discovers that the computer can't recognize it. The problem seems particularly prone to occur with SCSI (Small Computer System Interface) drives. SCSI brings an unusual flexibility to data storage, allowing fast access to large hard disks. A variety of devices, from tape drives to hard disks to CD-ROM equipment, can be hooked up to a single SCSI port, all functioning independently, yet all under the control of the host system. These are powerful advantages, but hardware forum regulars know that SCSI disks also can be temperamental and hard to install.

David J. Debre, who works for a computer consulting firm in Edmonton, Alberta, set out to add an SCSI drive to his computer. He installed the disk and proceeded with a com-



ERIC BERENDT

lesson learned, Feldman now knows the mistake was his. Plugging a device into a port on a running computer can be disastrous.

Disk experts encounter certain kinds of problems over and over again. Kevin Perry, vice president of marketing for Microtech International, a manufacturer of mass storage and memory products for the Macintosh, notes a number of situations that his technicians frequently see. Among them: The user tries to save a file to disk, only to encounter a "read/write error." Assuming the worst, he or she thinks the disk will require factory repair. But Perry says such problems are often caused by bad blocks on the disk. Using the test and repair utilities supplied by the

plete low-level disk format. He followed that up with a set of diagnostic tests that the new device passed with flying colors. But when he loaded Windows, Debre found no icon for the new drive. What's more, when he exited Windows, his diagnostic programs told him that the drive had been corrupted. A message to the IBM Hardware Forum helped to track down the culprit: A driver needed to run Windows was making it impossible for the drive to function.

The solution to Debre's problems was quick to come via a suggestion from forum member Skip Lutz. Debre needed a software driver designed to work with his Adaptec controller board; Lutz proceeded to send one via e-mail. "As soon as I installed the driver, the SCSI system seemed to settle down," says Debre. "I have been using the driver ever since, and it appears to be the solution."

Debre's problems, however, weren't over yet. One of the first programs he loaded onto the new SCSI disk was an antivirus package, which quickly informed him that his new disk was infected with the so-called "Monkey" virus. It was only after eliminating the

virus that he had a workable system.

A virus is a known menace, but if you find it with the right software, you can eliminate it. What garners most of the attention in CompuServe forums, however, are problems that aren't so clear cut. Ask Mark McKean, a free-lance writer and graphic designer from Toledo, Ohio. McKean's drive was copying a set of audio files when it suddenly stopped working. Investigating, McKean found that only five of the files had actually been copied. What's more, subsequent copy attempts were limited; the computer would copy only files of 10K in length or less. The problem occurred only when copying files from a diskette drive or downloading them by modem; oddly, the drive worked flawlessly when saving files from software already on the drive itself.

McKean's problem has thus far stumped even the hard disk mavens in the Mac Hardware Forum. One response to his posting suggested that he was encountering a quirk of his SCSI system. A check of all the cabling, however, revealed no loose connections, and the hard disk is the only device currently

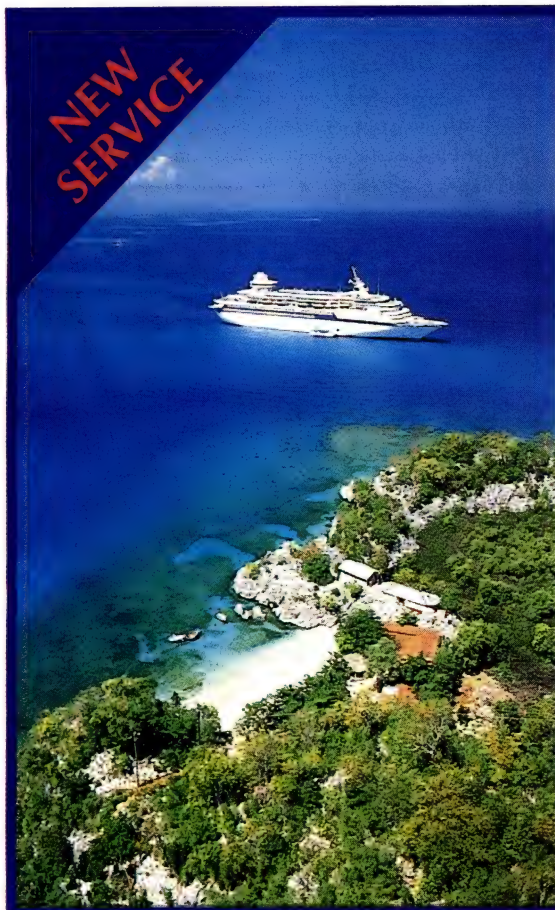
attached to McKean's SCSI port, ruling out conflicts with other peripherals. Furthermore, scans of the disk using the Norton Utilities and other diagnostic programs have revealed a host of bad sectors and other problems.

What caused them? McKean doesn't know yet, but he's even more worried about the Macintosh he uses at work—a hard drive that won't boot up when his scanner is connected to it. "Now that's a problem causing havoc with my work," McKean says. "The problem with the hard drive at home seems minimal by comparison."

Like many other forum regulars, McKean has found that as storage devices have gotten larger and more capable, they also have become quirkiest. The oddball behavior of hard drives is sure to keep CompuServe's numerous hardware forums busy for a long time to come. For more, see "Hard Disk Tools and Tips", p. 28.

Paul A. Gilster is the author of The Internet Navigator (John Wiley & Sons, 1993). His CompuServe User ID number is 75300,2523.

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Hard Disk Tools and Tips: Forum Files

A search of the libraries in CompuServe's forums turns up many useful tools for maintaining and repairing hard disks. Here is a listing of some of the more popular ones:

DESKTOP PUBLISHING FORUM (GO DTPFORUM)

Group Pointers—Transcript of a hard disk management conference. Library 1 "Forum Transcripts," DISKCO.TXT (17,851 bytes).

IBM HARDWARE FORUM (GO IBMHW)

Test That Disk—A shareware program that allows you to run thorough read/write test routines on your disk without disturbing data. Library 1, "Disk/Disk Utils," HDTEST.ZIP (139,775 bytes).

Evaluating an SCSI Drive—This diagnostic shareware program tests an SCSI drive, remapping bad records when they are found. Library 1, DRVST.ARC (21,504 bytes).

Hard Disk Performance—Coretest checks average access time and data transfer rates to gauge your disk's performance. Library 1, CORTST.ZIP (34,266 bytes).

Disk Tools Compared—A text file that compares two hard disk test programs, SpinRite and Disk Technician Advanced. Library 1, SPNDTA.ZIP (18,217 bytes).

Startup Diagnosis—A useful text file with information about how to determine disk problems during the startup process. Library 1, BOOT.DOC (11,065 bytes).

Hard Disk Tool—A shareware program, Professional Master Key lets you alter file attributes, edit files and sectors directly, unformat hard disks and more. Library 1, PMK32.ZIP (205,576 bytes).

IBM NEW USERS FORUM (GO IBMNEW)

Disk Problems with a Twist—The Disk Doctor gives you humorous case histories of strange disk behavior drawn from actual cases. Library 7, "Ask the Sysops," DISKDO.ARC (64,768 bytes).

MACINTOSH DEVELOPERS FORUM (GO MACDEV)

Hard Disk Medic—A Hard Disk Medic and Booting Camp file from Apple Computer's Macintosh Tech Note series. Library 7, "Apple Systems Tools," TN134.WRT (39,296 bytes).

MACINTOSH HARDWARE FORUM (GO MACHW)

Icon Fix—Fix your lost hard drive icon. This "fix" renames the System file to QSYSTEM, allowing access to a crashed hard disk. Works only

using MacWorks with an HFS-formatted hard disk. Library 8, "Early Macs," QSYSTEM.BIN (12,544 bytes).

Rebuilding the Desktop—Minor Repairs is a public-domain program that rebuilds your Macintosh Desktop file while preserving Finder comments. Library 9, "Disks/Storage," MNRRPR.SIT (6,016 bytes).

Quick File Recovery—Here's a handy utility that will recover files from a damaged Macintosh diskette. Library 9, FLOPPY.SIT (73,728 bytes).

MACINTOSH SYSTEMS FORUM (GO MACSYS)

The Kitchen Sink—An application that tells you everything you need to know about your disk drives, screens, slots and more. Library 7, "Utilities," WHAT.SIT (31,744 bytes).

ZENITH DATA SYSTEMS FORUM (GO ZENITH)

Disk Failure Preparation—This shareware package prepares you for a boot failure by turning a diskette into a record of your critical system files. Library 5, "DOS Utilities," BACRES.ZIP (35,212 bytes).

Hard Disk Recovery Utilities—A collection of useful utilities to help you build a recovery diskette, including a text file about crash recovery. Library 5, DRFINF.ZIP (70,624 bytes).

Diskette Repair—A repair and rescue program for diskettes. Menus and windows make it easy to use. Library 5, ANADSK.ZIP (62,680 bytes).

Read More About It

CompuServe's Computer Database Plus (GO COMPDB) is a treasure trove of articles on maintaining and repairing hard disks. Try coupling a key term such as HARD DISK with such search words as MAINTENANCE and TUTORIAL. You then can narrow the search from the main menu by selecting additional search words or specifying more recent articles. Selections include:

"The Bomb Shelter: Avoid Lost-File Disaster with Basic Hard Disk Know-How," *Computer Shopper*, October 1993. Reference #A14348182.

"File Fragmentation: How to Keep Your Hard Disk from Going to Pieces," *Windows Sources*, September 1993. Reference #A14209855.

"A Great Little Housekeeper," *Home Office Computing*, April 1993. Reference #A13672935.

"Coping with DOS," *Windows Sources*, April 1993. Reference #A13511238.

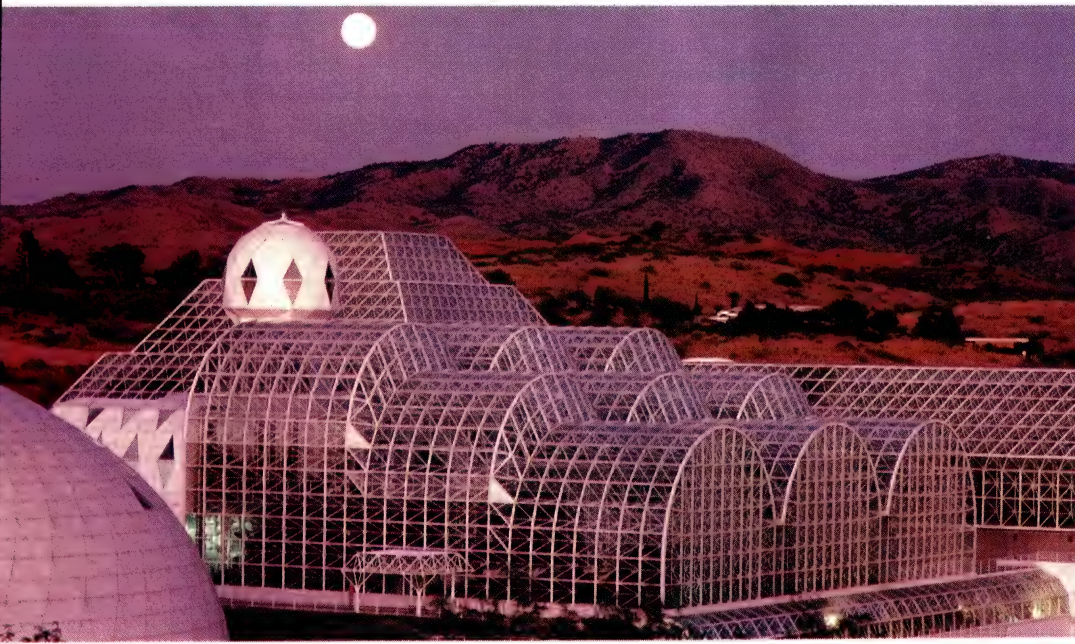
"Tips to Organize Your Hard Disk," *PC World*, March 1993. Reference #A13464162.

"Tame Your Unruly Hard Disk," *PC/Computing*, February 1993. Reference #A13315797.

"Keys to Successful Hard Disk Management," *PC/Computing*, January 1993. Reference #A13031003.

"Clean Your Disks!" *Windows-DOS Developer's Journal*, September 1992. Reference #12610793.

"What to Do When Your Hard Drive Conks Out," *PC/Computing*, May 1992. Reference #A12069402.



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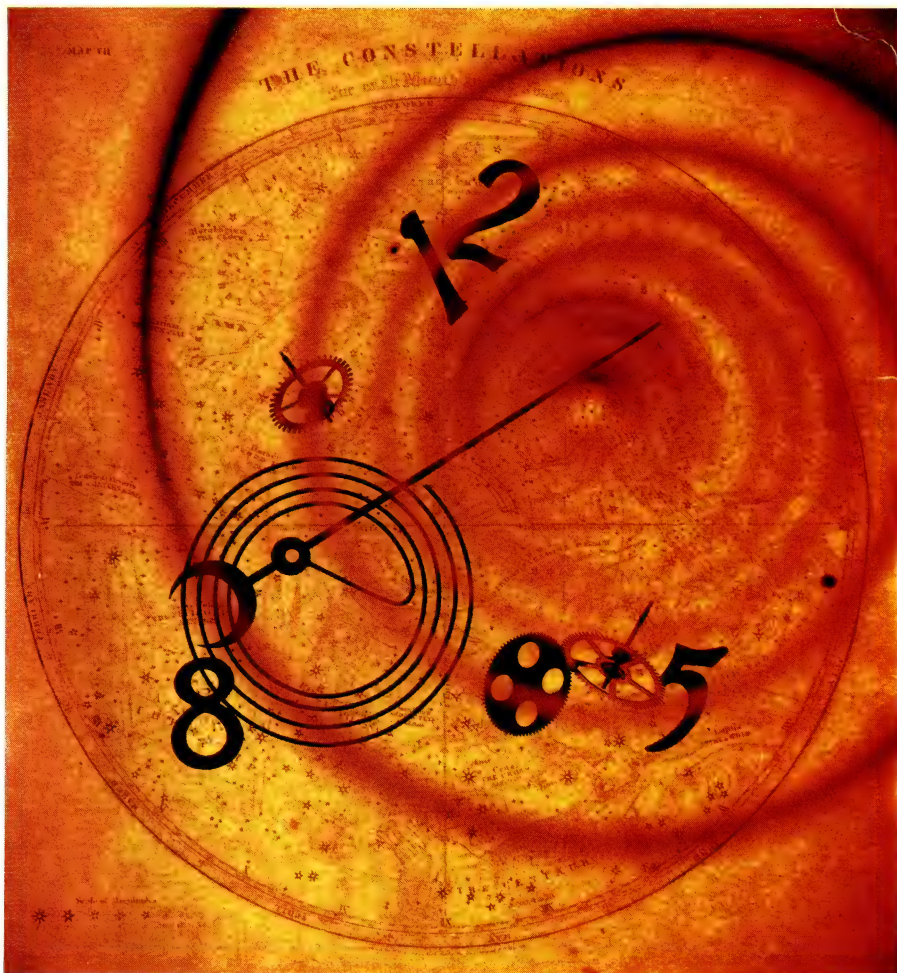
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▼
Buying Time with
Software and a System

▼
Scheduling
Software, p. 32

▼
Making Contacts,
page 34

► **It's perpetual, yet there's never enough: time. CompuServers save a little with programs and ideas.**

Anyone in business knows that time is a precious commodity. But ask busy professionals whether they're happy with their own time management, and you'll often get an emphatic "no." Everyone is scouting for better ways to schedule appointments, complete tasks when needed and plan the course of future work. Lawyers, doctors, public relations specialists—all have their own needs, each requiring time-management tools adapted to their professions.

Marcia Layton found that out when she changed jobs. Formerly a marketing communications director at Kodak, she started her own firm in Rochester, New York, specializing in business plan writing. Being her own boss quickly created new problems. "Those time-management skills that worked so well in the corporate world just weren't enough for an entrepreneur," Layton says, "because in addition to completing projects, you have all the administrative and marketing activities that need to be managed." Layton's solution: better organization.

She set up a "status board" showing all

current and pending projects, so she always knows how close each is to completion. Equally critical is a notebook scheduler program called Priority Manager, from Priority Management Inc., which she uses to track daily appointments, due dates for projects, phone calls and ongoing discussions with clients. Finally, creating a single site for all her documents proved a major help. "One of the best investments I've made," Layton notes, "is a three-drawer filing cabinet. I save time looking for files because everything is in that cabinet."

Attorney Brett Weiss also has his eye on scheduling, although he has adopted a more high-tech solution. To avoid losing track of critical dates for hearings or trials, Weiss established a document tracking system. Each paper that comes through his office is stamped to indicate that it has been posted into PackRat, a personal information management program from Polaris Software. The absence of a stamp indicates an unlogged item. Weiss then sets up a series of alarms within PackRat, timed to go off at intervals before the event—one month, one week and one day before, and so on—to

Paul A. Gilster is the author of The Internet Navigator (John Wiley & Sons, 1993). His CompuServe User ID Number is 75300,2523.

ensure that he won't be caught by surprise when the day finally arrives.

For others in the high-pressure legal profession, Weiss offers these tips: Use different colored files for different kinds of cases, so you can move quickly to the kind of file you need. Use a scanner and feed articles of interest for a particular case into your computer. And keep your hard disk well organized. By putting all of his correspondence and pleadings in one subdirectory, the Maryland-based attorney can set up further subdirectories in logical order beneath them, allowing him to go directly to the file he needs.

One theme resonates through any discussion of effective time management: know yourself. Professionals from many fields point out that unless you can set up a system that reflects your own habits, no benefits will result from your efforts. For example, some people work best late at night, as does writer Robin Rowland. "It's advisable to do your most important work at the time your body likes to do it," Rowland says. "So on my creative days, I first do any urgent administrative work and then go on to my current projects, with most of the writing done in the evening."

Another of Rowland's tips is to set aside a particular time for the essential but routine tasks, such as paying the bills and answering the mail. Using Monday for this purpose, Rowland lets letters and calls accumulate until that day; the rest of the week is kept free for creative work. The Toronto-based writer looks to a software program called Top Priority, from Spinnaker Software Corp., to help him organize projects and rank necessary tasks by importance.

Whether you're organizing by the day or the week, putting your responsibilities into some kind of coherent order is the basic task of time management. Thom Cannell, a freelance writer in Lansing, Michigan, specializes in both the automotive and computer markets. He uses a program called First Things First, from Visionary Software Inc., to schedule important events on his Macintosh. Creative work is reserved for late in the day; in the morning, says Cannell, "I just chug through the dross while coffee clears the cobwebs." To stay fresh, he keeps multiple stories on-screen at the same time and moves often between them.

Physicians tend to roll their eyes when asked about time management; they're generally pushed to the limit and frequently lack the ability to reassign critical tasks to more convenient periods. Gerald E. Meltzer, an ophthalmologist practicing in Denver, Colorado, and the editor of a magazine called *EyeCare Technology*, notes that each physician has his or her own methods to keep the office running, but Meltzer's include these principles: Carry a pocket dictaphone so you can dictate your thoughts immediately after seeing a patient; use preprinted forms wherever possible to save time; and don't take

phone calls in the office unless absolutely necessary.

As for family time, doctors often find it in short supply. Meltzer thinks busy professionals have to take care with their off-duty hours. "Friends of mine who are fairly good at this schedule family time just as they schedule work time," Meltzer says.

Computer consultant Jack Frosch of Herndon, Virginia, also relies on scheduling, but notes that it's easy to put too much on a single to-do list. To get around the problem, Frosch prioritizes his list, with the top three to five items getting the most attention. Time-sensitive calls go to the top of the list, while follow-up calls and thank-you letters take the second rung, with market research, errand and routine correspondence at the low point. Frosch is a believer in setting goals. "If you don't know where you're going, you can't organize to get there. Once you identify what's important, build structures to support that."

The structures Frosch talks about involve filing information. "Have a place to put everything you want to retrieve later," he says. "Have an action file that never has more than a few things in it. Try not to touch a one-page anything more than once. That is, read it and act on it—filing it, scheduling a

follow-up action, discarding it or whatever. Files marked 'to be filed' just pile up."

Public relations specialist George Berman has his own ideas about how to prioritize tasks. Berman, who manages his own agency in Yonkers, New York, grades each chore with an A, B or C. "A" means new business opportunities, which are always at the top of the list. "B" is work in progress; "C" signifies routine administration. Each project appears with a letter and a number on the to-do list—A3, for example, will always receive attention before C1. Berman keeps the list in a shareware program called 2Do, which designates levels of priority and assigns them different colors. He also uses a paper-based Day-Timer, from Day-Timers Inc., for appointments.

In fact, combining notebook-style scheduling and to-do lists with software products is a common practice. Few are willing to forego standard pen-and-paper systems completely, choosing instead to supplement them with a wide variety of software tools. Whatever their methods, one thing remains certain—every professional must determine a way to keep projects moving along on schedule. For a collection of files and articles on this topic, see "Time Frames," p. 32.

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Time Frames: Clock-Watching Software

No matter what business you're in, your time is important. Fortunately, a host of commercial time-management programs are supported on CompuServe. There are also a number of shareware programs to consider. Here's where to find both:

QTC!—A shareware time clock program that's usable on networks; includes to-do lists, schedules and time cards. IBM Applications Forum (GO IBMAPP), Library 6, "Business Apps," QTC511.LZH (377,212 bytes).

TASK-PRO—A shareware business and time organizer for tracking work assignments. IBM Applications Forum, Library 6, TSKPRO.EXE (166,784 bytes).

Task Master—A shareware work planner that can handle to-do lists and outlining as well as timelines for projects. IBM Applications Forum, Library 6, "Gen. Business," TASKMS.EXE (145,298 bytes).

Time and Place/2—IBM's network-based time-management program for coordinating schedules and group activities. IBM Desktop Forum (GO IBMDESK), Section and Library 9, "Time and Place/2."

Lotus Organizer, Agenda—Scheduling and contact management tools from Lotus Development Corp. Lotus Words and Pixels Forum (GO LOTUSB), Section and Library 7, "Agenda," and Section and Library 14, "Organizer."

CalendarMaker for Windows and Mac—CE Software's calendar programs help you to create your own customized calendars. Macintosh A Vendor Forum (GO MACAVEN), Section and Library 4, "CE Software."

Ah! Schedule—A shareware program for the Macintosh that lets users create Gantt-based project management charts. Macintosh Applications Forum (GO MACAP), Library 6, "General Business," AHSCHL.SIT (216,448 bytes).

Auspice—A calendar and time-based reminder program for the Macintosh. Freeware. Macintosh Applications Forum, Library 15, "Misc. Applications," AUSP31.SEA (64,128 bytes).

Microsoft Project—Manage schedules and resources on projects large or small. Microsoft Applications Forum (GO MSAPP), Section and Library 7, "Windows Project," and Section and Library 8, "Project for the Mac."

Ascend—Contact management and time-saving techniques from Franklin Quest Co. in a full-featured software product. Office Automation Forum (GO OAFORUM), Section and Library 9, "Franklin Quest." Frequent discussions of time-management software are offered in Section 1, "The Break Room."

TimeVision—Powercore's powerful single-user time manager complements its Network Scheduler for workgroups. PC Vendor B Support Forum (GO PCVENB), Section and Library 1, "Powercore Inc."

Timeslips—Time and billing software for any size firm; includes a complete receivables system and custom report writer. PC Vendor D Support Forum (GO PCVEND), Section and Library 8, "Timeslips Corp."

Top Priority, Calendar Creator—Top Priority is a project organizer, while Calendar Creator lets you design your own calendars. Spinnaker Forum (GO SPINNER), Section and Library 1, "General," and Section and Library 14, "Calendar Creator."

Time Line, On Target, Guide Line, ACT!—Project management and contact tools from Symantec Corp. include the highly regarded ACT! for Windows. Symantec Applications Forum (GO SYMAPPS), Section and Library 4, "Project Management" (for Time Line, On Target and Guide Line), and Section and Library 8, "ACT! Products," for ACT!.

PackRat—A personal information manager that includes project management and calendar tools. Windows 3rd Party A Forum (GO WINAPA), Section and Library 11, "Polaris."

Project Scheduler for Windows—Software for project planning, tracking, analysis and reporting. Windows 3rd Party E Forum (GO WINAPE), Section and Library 1, "Scitor Corp."

2Do—A shareware personal task and contact manager for Microsoft Windows that can be customized to fit your requirements. Windows Shareware Forum (GO WINSHARE), Library 12, "PIM/Info Utils," 2DOV11.ZIP (412,250 bytes).

WordPerfect Office—Access personal and group appointments, to-do items and notes in a single customizable interface, with multiuser calendars. WordPerfect Files Forum (GO WPFILES), Library 4, "Office/Gateways." Also WordPerfect Users Forum (GO WPUSER), Section and Library 8, "Office/Shell/Nets."



Read More About It

Magazine Database Plus (GO MAGDB) and Business Database Plus (GO BUSDB) are loaded with ideas for managing your time. Because the topic is broad, try this search technique: Search first using such keywords as TIME and MANAG* (the latter will retrieve records for any words with a root of manag-, such as "manage," "management" or "managing"). Then narrow the search by looking for such terms as SCHEDUL AND TRACK in the record text.

"Now Is the Time to Save Time: Our Experts Tell You How," *Cosmopolitan*, August 1993. Reference #A14116264.

"Escaping the Time Trap," *Home Office Computing*, May 1993. Reference #A13714148.

"The Well Organized Marketer: To Become More Productive, Try These Tips and Tricks," *Home Office Computing*, March 1993. Reference #A13669237.

"Foil the Time Grabbers," *Executive Female*, July-August, 1992. Reference #A12479465.

"92 Timesavers," *Woman's Day*, June 23, 1992. Reference #A12279347.

"Catching Up with the Times" (on time-based organization), *Business Horizons*, July-August 1992. Reference #A12538537.

"The Custom-Made Day Planner," *Inc.*, February 1992. Reference #A11828779.

"Tips, Tricks and Secrets: 70 Exclusive Time, Money and Lifesavers for Your Business," *Home Office Computing*, December 1991. Reference #A11575632.

"Time-Saving Techniques," *Management Review*, October 1991. Reference #A11367852.

"Beat the Clock," *Executive Female*, May-June 1991. Reference #A10681856.

"Can You Really Manage Your Life with an Electronic Organizer?" (Includes related article on five key time-management tasks for the self-employed), *Home Office Computing*, July 1991. Reference #A10882528.

"When You Waste Time, You're Wasting Money," *Management Review*, May 1991. Reference #A10673716.

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Finding Your Contacts

▶ The self-employed get selfless online help from other professionals.

Home-based business people typically cannot afford to have a computer consultant, legal counsel, accountant, translator, researcher and a marketing/advertising expert on staff. Yet, as a business grows, access to all kinds of experts is necessary, often on short notice. For people who work from home, online networking is an easy, efficient way to develop the professional contacts needed to run a business and to create a "golden Rolodex."

A couple of years ago, video producer Avery Russell was under contract to make a fund-raising video for a U.S. government agency. At the last minute, he learned that actor John Forsythe was willing to donate his time to narrate the program and appear on camera. Unfortunately, the contract did not cover the costs of flying Avery's Washington, D.C.-based crew to California for the taping.

Russell asked for help in the Broadcast Professionals Forum. "I was able to get referrals for Los Angeles-based crew members and equipment rental companies," he says. "Several members responded to my note. I followed up on the leads by telephone, arranged for my crew, flew to California, recorded John Forsythe and came home with a very happy client."

Gary Freeman, who with his partner provides professional seminars, litigation management support and marketing services from Texas, found leads to an agent in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to market a product. CompuServe contacts also helped him find a site in Corpus Christi, Texas, for seminars where he could rent a room that would hold 100 people for \$25.

Through CompuServe, Freeman has been able to amass accounting contacts and experts that "taught me how to market seminars with less than no money," he says. "What is the

value of having someone to not only tell you what the customs of the country are but also to relate what the man on the street thinks? This is the real value of online networking."

Rochester, New York-based business plan writer Marcia Layton has made a variety of online contacts: "from financing-related individuals, such as financing consultants, brokers and venture capitalists to colleagues to clients and potential clients to writers and editors looking for sources for articles," she says.

"You just never know where your online contacts will lead you," she adds. After Layton responded to a message from someone looking for suggestions on small-business marketing, she was referred to a writer who "wanted to talk to me about innovative small-business marketing ideas.

That contact led to an article in which I'll be quoted."

Online networking starts with finding forums in your areas of interest and just hanging out. Diana Gruber, a programmer who runs her own software company in Las Vegas, Nevada, has hundreds of professional contacts online who

provide her with legal and marketing advice and programming tips. "I just poked around looking for relevant forums and began chatting with the regulars until I became a regular, too," she says, adding, "Be friendly. Overcome your shyness. Try to contribute something to the conversation. When people get to know you, they will seek you out for your opinion on your particular area of specialty, and they will return the favor by sharing their knowledge with you." Often, the amount of information you share is proportionate to the amount of help you receive.

For example, Drew Linsalata, a Northpole, New York-based designer and builder of homes, offices and stores, has been networking online for about six months. He has received advice on improving his computer-aided design system, and information on new tax laws and accounting regulations. He also has made contact with several consulting engineers in allied design fields who he may consult on future products. "In exchange, I have provided tips for avoiding construction rip-offs and offered encouragement to another individual who is considering starting a business in a related field," he says. Online contacts also led Linsalata to be a guest on a radio show discussing the design and construction of home offices.

Informal contacts online can easily develop into long-term, mutually rewarding relationships. Jane James, a management consultant based in London, has swapped marketing

PERSONAL ENTERPRISE

'Netiquette' Tips

Experts suggest that you follow the golden rule when creating and maintaining your golden Rolodex: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

"'Netiquette' is not much different from face-to-face etiquette," says Marguerite L. Ellen, Networking section leader of the Working From Home Forum (GO WORK). "Don't take advantage. Give as well as gain. Be consistent. Be honest. Don't engage in hype that isn't backed up with reality. Don't be a bully. Be positive. Be nurturing."

One of the touchiest areas can involve drawing the line between asking an expert a "quick question" and asking for something you really ought to be paying for. According to the experts, common sense works here, too.

"If you feel that an answer to your question will involve a lot of effort on the part of the answerer, it is a simple thing to phrase your question in a way that indicates you are willing to pay for the help," says contract programmer Peter O'Connell. "For example, it is unreasonable to expect someone in the Legal Forum to write a contract for you without being paid. It is quite another thing to ask if sentence B is better than sentence A in a contract you are writing yourself."

Consultant Gary Freeman offers one other bit of advice on network etiquette: Never ask someone something that will impinge on his business. For example, if you run a medical claims business in Dallas, don't ask someone who runs the same kind of business in Dallas how she does it. Asking someone in San Francisco the same questions is considered perfectly acceptable, however.

—JS

ideas with a contact in the United States. But just as important to her is the personal support she gets online.

"I've been corresponding for a year or so now with a Californian in the Working From Home Forum," says James. "He runs his own business and is also an active grandparent. We have a great deal in common because I run my own business, too, and his grandkids are roughly the same age as my children. We swap family news, talk about how business is going and so on. Often I ask him to check up on software or hardware that's available in the United States but not in the United Kingdom. His information has helped me to plan purchases better—for example, holding off until a new release is available here."

Networking newcomer Terry Wiegmann of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, is trying to find her way in the online world. Employed on an information service's help desk, she's using CompuServe to explore the possibilities of other careers, including home-based businesses.

"I seem to remember an article in *Working Woman* in which one woman was approached by another who asked to 'benchmark her'—to find out how she got where she is today compared to her experience," Wiegmann explains. "I guess that's what I want to do with some of these folks—to see how my experience stacks up with others competing for jobs and businesses."

Developing and maintaining an online Rolodex takes time and organization to avoid being overwhelmed by a flood of information and to stay in touch with newfound contacts. Most find the effort worthwhile and relatively easy. "Staying in touch with CompuServe contacts is the same as staying in touch with anyone—you just do it," says James. "You get to know people as individuals, so it's really not a problem to find things to say." She offers one last bit of practical advice: "Back up your address book." For more tips, see "Resources for Online Networking," p. 36.

Jan Smith is associate editor at Ziff Desktop Information in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her CompuServe User ID Number is 76000,23.



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Resources for Online Networking

When it comes to drumming up contacts by networking, a number of Working From Home Forum (GO WORK) library files can help:

NEON News Monthly—The July 1993 issue of the *National Entrepreneur Opportunity Network* includes tips from experts and information for home-based or self-employed professionals. Library 1, "General Information," NEO793.TXT (64,024 bytes).

10 Commandments of Networking—Tips on how to effectively network with local businesses. Includes advice on making referrals for others. Library 7, "Getting Business," NETWRK.10 (1,774 bytes).

Creating New Business—Do you have all the customers you want or need? Article on networking through direct mail and local associations and organizations. Information on how

and where to begin and generating new leads.
Library 7, NETWK.ZIP (12,134 bytes).

Study Group—Forum study group discussions on Chapter 2 of the book *Getting Business to Come to You* on networking, its cost and referral strategies. Library 7, COST.ZIP (14,954 bytes) and GB3.ZIP (11,078 bytes).

Packaging Yourself—Forum study group discussion on Chapter 4 of *Getting Business to Come to You* on packaging yourself effectively. Library 7, YOU.TXT (22,027 bytes).

Read More About It

Mining CompuServe's media databases also yields a high return on networking information. Try Business Database Plus or Magazine Database Plus, using such keywords as NETWORKING or BUSINESS CONTACTS, then narrowing the search for more recent articles or by specifying article type. The following are just a few such articles available:

**BUSINESS DATABASE PLUS
(GO BUSDB)**

"The Professional (and Personal) Profits of Networking," *Training & Development Journal*, September 1990. Reference #A9414511.

"Business Contacts," Puget Sound Business Journal, Feb. 18, 1991. Reference #A10383762.

"Building a Chain of Contacts," *Training & Development Journal*, January 1991. Reference #A9786253.

"It's a Small World; There's No Better Way to Maintain Relationships Around the World Than Through Electronic Networks," *Link-Up*, September–October 1990. Reference #A9089846.

"Peer Contacts Called Key to Success," *Travel Weekly*, July 17, 1989. Reference #A7794801.

MAGAZINE DATABASE PLUS (GO MAGDB)

"An Introvert's Guide to Networking," *Executive Female*, July-August 1993. Reference #A14101136.

"Best Books on Networking," *Executive Female*, May-June 1993. Reference #A13831059.

"Making Contact: The Smart Girl's Guide to Networking," *Cosmopolitan*, March 1993. Reference #A13473233.

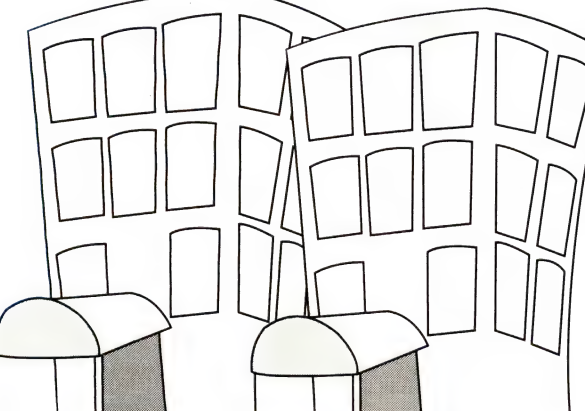
"Networking '90s Style: Helping Those in Need," *Executive Female*, November-December 1992. Reference #A13818225.

"Caring for Contacts," Executive Female,
May-June 1989. Reference #A7635551. ☎

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A Real Space Case?

► **There are reasons to believe in UFOs, say researchers and buffs having close encounters online.**

Last September, Baltimore graphic designer/artist Mike Hughes and his girlfriend, Elizabeth, were taking a stroll along the beach in Ocean City, Maryland. That morning he had awakened from a particularly vivid dream in which panelists on a TV talk show were arguing about the existence of unidentified flying objects—more commonly known as UFOs. Half-jokingly as they strolled along the surf, Hughes looked up at the clear evening sky. “Look,” he said, “if you’re out there, now is the perfect time to show yourselves. There’s no one around. Just us.”

A moment later, Elizabeth called out, “What are those red lights?” Two red spheres appeared, moving erratically from north to south, then merged and flew as one light. Hughes was astounded. “I have lived near an airport all of my life and have never seen anything behave remotely like those lights did,” he says.

Was there a connection between Hughes’ possible precognitive dream or the fact that he had sand-sculpted an alien face on that same beach as a joke just a couple of weeks earlier? Your answer depends on which side you support in the

long-running debate about whether or not there’s intelligent life beyond Earth. That lively debate over the existence of UFOs and extraterrestrial life rages every day on CompuServe, where you can hear the latest tales of UFO sightings, alien abductions and other related phenomena.

The Issues (GO ISSUES), Space (GO SPACEFORUM) and New Age (GO NEW-AGE) forums all offer message sections and libraries dedicated to UFOs. Some of the topics under discussion by UFOlogists online might strike some as a bit “out there”—especially claims that the U.S. government is in cahoots with aliens—but there are enough messages of sightings and unexplained happenings to make all but the most hardened cynics think, “There’s more here than meets the eye.”

And then there’s the law of averages. It’s estimated that there are 100 billion stars in the galaxy, of which a significant number are similar to Earth’s sun and have planets similar in makeup to Earth. What are the odds of life, then, having evolved on only one planet? University of California/Santa Cruz astronomer Frank D. Drake estimates that some 10,000 technologically advanced extraterrestrial civilizations may exist in our galaxy alone.

Dan Kening is a free-lance writer based in Chicago. His CompuServe User ID number is 71154,0467.

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with People, p. 46

Scanning the Skies for Satellites

And the popular media have always enjoyed the topic, especially film. Here alien depictions have reflected the times, from *War of the World's* invasion force to *ET's* cute, benevolent visitor to the recent *Fire in the Sky's* cold, detached surgeons. Books such as Whitley Streiber's best-selling *Communion* and Budd Hopkins' *Missing Time* and *Intruders*, and TV shows such as *The X Chronicles* and *Unsolved Mysteries* have combined to take the idea of extraterrestrial life out of the realm of the tabloids.

"Behind all the publicity (about UFOs) is the theme that now is the time in our history to contact alien life," says Peter Partridge of Vancouver, British Columbia, a former airline executive and an active online UFOlogist who has been interested in UFOs since he saw one as a child. "Many UFO experts say we are at a point in our evolution and environmental destruction that demands direct intervention by aliens out of self-preservation. They point to increased sightings and such phenomena as crop circles, animal mutilations and human abductions as preparatory to that ultimate introduction."

Both the U.S. government and academics are taking seriously the search for and dissemination of extraterrestrial knowledge. NASA's SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) program hopes to find evidence of intelligent life via radio signals within 10 years, though opposition in Congress to funding the project threatens to curtail it. Each year the University of Wyoming in Laramie hosts the Rocky Mountain Conference on UFO Investigations, hosted by Professor Emeritus Leo Sprinkle. And last year Massachusetts Institute of Technology Professor David Pritchard organized a conference at the school on the topic of UFO abductees.

UFOlogist David Thacker adds that computer bulletin boards and networks such as CompuServe and the Internet also have played a major part in disseminating information and theories about UFOs. "I use the Internet gateway feature of CompuServe Mail to correspond with other UFOlogists across North America," says Thacker, an agricultural technology consultant in Alberta, Canada. "I use the 'Extraterrestrials?' section of the Space Forum to distribute UFO information to others worldwide and to receive information that others have posted."

Online debates cover the validity of such famous abduction cases as that of Betty and Barney Hill in 1961 and horror novelist Whitley Streiber's in 1985. Other hot topics include the existence of "MJ-12," the supposed high-level U.S. governmental organization that has been covering up the existence of alien visitors for 46 years; "Area 51"

While the existence of UFOs may continue to be debated well into the 21st century, there's no denying that a number of hobbyists are regularly seeing unnatural objects in the nighttime sky. Man-made satellites orbiting Earth can be viewed relatively easily—often with just the naked eye. The trick, though, is in knowing when and where to look for them.

Satellite watchers on CompuServe congregate in the Astronomy Forum's (GO ASTROFORUM) Section 3, "Viewing Satellites," dedicated to this fast-growing hobby. There, tips for viewing specific communications, weather and other satellites can be found, while in the corresponding library, satellite-tracking programs are available for downloading. The Space (GO SPACEFORUM) and Ham Radio (GO HAMNET) forums also contain useful information on satellites.

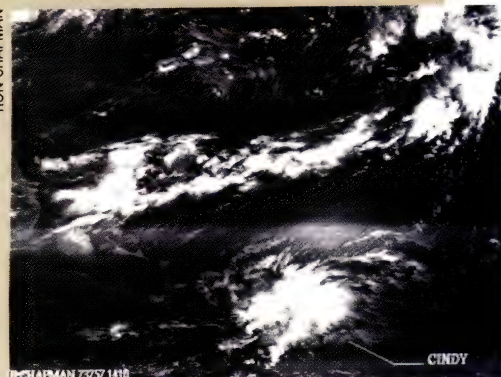
Anthony Beresford, a computer systems officer in Adelaide, Australia, dates his interest in viewing satellites to his 1958 sighting of Sputnik II. "You do not need any optical equipment to view satellites," he says. "If you go outside on a clear night as the sky is darkening and look around for the next hour, I am sure you will see at least five satellites."

To identify what you're seeing, according to satellite viewer Frank Hentschel, you need the orbital elements of the satellite, tracking software and a computer to crunch the numbers. A retired Air Force officer now living near Philadelphia, Hentschel has written *Presat*, one of several satellite-tracking programs available for downloading.

Twice a week, Conrad Kirksey, leader of the Astronomy Forum's Viewing Satellites section, uploads the orbital elements for scores of satellites as provided by NASA. You input the elements of the satellite

near Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, where some claim the U.S. military is housing and flying captured alien aircraft; famous UFO cases such as the alleged UFO crash near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947; and the controversial finding of the Air Force's "Project Blue Book," which studied nearly 13,000 UFO sightings between 1947 and 1969 before concluding in its 1,465-page report, "Nothing has come from the study of UFOs."

"Our discussions range from the simple facts to sometimes outrageous ideas," says David Brune, leader of the New Age Forum's UFO section. "One thing I try to promote,



1993 storm 'Cindy': Russian satellite GIF

you're trying to track as well as your location in longitude and latitude and the time frame you want to predict. The tracking program then determines the times the satellite will be visible in your location and tells you where to look in azimuth (compass direction) and elevation (angle above the horizon). The rest is up to your eyes—perhaps aided by some low-powered binoculars.

Some, such as New Jersey computer software test analyst Ron Chapman, take satellite viewing a step further. A radio amateur, Chapman uses radio receiver hardware to capture photos taken by weather satellites. These then are converted to GIF files and uploaded within moments to the Astronomy Forum's Library 11, "Planet Earth GIFs."

"Like anything you wish to do well, it takes both practice and patience," says Chapman about satellite viewing. "But once you get the hang of how things work, you'll be amazed at how many satellites you can spot just by sitting back and looking up at the sky."

—DK

though, is freedom of thought. This is a place where members can express views without fear of reprisal or being made fun of."

The New Age Forum has done several UFO-related group projects. One was a mass effort by CompuServe and Internet members worldwide to attempt telepathic contact with extraterrestrials during a two-hour time period. "Though nothing really happened," Brune says, "it was amazing to see all these people come together for one night to try something." Another online group project is the creation of an "abduction database," which will compile accounts of alien abduc-

The Online X Files: UFO and Related Uploads

Whether you're a true believer or a true skeptic on the subject of UFOs, the libraries of the Issues, New Age and Space forums contain hundreds of files on the subjects of UFOs, extraterrestrial visitors, alien abductions and related phenomena. Here's a sampling:

ISSUES FORUM (GO ISSUESFORUM)

Gulf War UFO—Details of a reported UFO shot down by an American F-16 over Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm, as described by a Russian colonel who visited the crash site. Library 10, "Unexplained Phenomena," GULF.TXT (3,337 bytes).

Famous UFO Crashes—A list compiled by the Phoenix Foundation of famous UFO crashes around the world, dating to 1897. Library 10, UFOCRA.TXT (7,147 bytes).

Alien Abductions—Article from the *Harvard University Gazette* featuring views of Harvard Medical School Professor Dr. John Mack, who has studied more than 60 alien abduction cases. Library 10, JMACK.ABD (11,087 bytes).

First Encounter—Firsthand account of "Corky" Ra's encounter with "beings not of this planet" and its aftereffects. Library 10, FIRSTE.TXT (19,516 bytes).

Gulf Breeze UFOs—Reports from multiple witnesses of UFOs flying over the Gulf Breeze/Pensacola, Florida, area on March 14, 1992. Library 10, GBUFOS.392 (3,134 bytes).

NEW AGE FORUM (GO NEWAGE)

UFO Facts—Comprehensive Zipped text file with answers to the most frequently asked questions about UFOs, along with lists of books on the topic, organizations and experts. From Internet. Library 15, "UFOlogy," AAVFAQ.ZIP (56,553 bytes).

Lear Paper—The "horrible truth" about the government's involvement with aliens uploaded by John Lear, an airline and military pilot who has flown missions for the CIA. Discusses UFOs, abductions, "Area 51" and "the real reason why UFOs are here." Library 15, LEAR.ZIP (12,248 bytes).

UFO Files List—Zipped list of files from the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) including GIF files from NASA. Library 15, MUFON.ZIP (92,437 bytes).

Skeptics' View—File from the *Skeptical Inquirer* debunking claims of the existence of UFOs, alien abductions and other aspects of UFOlogy. Library 15, SKEP.TXT (18,918 bytes).

Alien Visitors—A description of the various types of aliens that supposedly have visited Earth. Library 15, ALIENT.TXT (7,838 bytes).

Alien Implant Photo—GIF file reportedly showing an object implanted by aliens that was removed from an abductee. Library 15, IMPLNT.GIF (45,192 bytes).

SPACE FORUM (GO SPACEFORUM)

NASA Tape Editorial—Editorial from CUFON BBS in Seattle, Washington, discussing the "NASA videotape" of a space shuttle launch in which some claim a UFO can be seen near the spacecraft. Library 7, "Extraterrestrials?" NASATP.TXT (5,514 bytes).

Object 8-13A—Discussion of an object known as "8-13A" discovered near Jupiter by astronomer Dr. Leo Moffett. While it was cataloged as an "asteroid," some UFOlogists (including a prominent member of the British Interplanetary Society) say it is not a "natural" phenomenon. Library 17, 8-13A (4,974 bytes).

Top UFO Cases—A list of the 10 best-known UFO sightings, including Hudson Valley 1984; Cash/Landrum, Houston 1979; Roswell, New Mexico, 1947; and Snowflake, Arizona, 1974. Library 7, 10BEST.UFO (5,146 bytes).

MJ-12 Plot—Former U.S. Navy intelligence officer Bill Cooper's "Operation Majority" report claiming proof of the U.S. government's longstanding involvement with aliens and information about the top-secret MJ-12 committee. Library 7, MJ-12.TXT (16,586 bytes).

tions and make them available to serious investigators.

While some might scoff at tales of alien abduction, such as Streiber's *Communion*, a book and film of his experiences, others are deadly serious about it. One CompuServe member, who asked that his name not be used for fear of losing his defense industry job, says he began to have episodes of waking in a panic and symptoms of post-traumatic shock syndrome three years ago. "Since that time, I have undergone hypnotherapy and have, under hypnosis, described abductions by alien forces beginning at age 9 and continuing periodically to this day," he says.

In recent years, a number of mental health professionals have begun to seriously study such claims—one 1993 study based at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, found that people who report sightings, missing time and other anomalies are normal, often middle-class and educated, and have normal, not overactive, imaginations. These

professionals feel that people traumatized by such paranormal experiences need the same kind of treatment and understanding given to those suffering from anxiety, depression and the aftereffects of rape or plane crashes.

The New Age Forum recently began closed support group conferences for abductees on CompuServe. Rob Shepherd, an abductee who works for a Houston, Texas, abductee support organization, says the online conferences are invaluable. "The extreme stress and terror associated with the abduction phenomenon makes this a very hard thing to live with. Standard counseling just doesn't help these people. They need something extra, and that extra thing is a support group," he says. Those interested in the sessions should contact Shepherd at User ID number 71174,324 or David Brune at User ID number 70671,2063.

For those people merely considering the

possibility of UFOs and intelligent life elsewhere, belief raises some thorny philosophical issues, questions that are frequently explored online. "The main issues are really

conceptual, and they strike at the heart of many existing theories," says Jan Lamprecht, a UFO buff who logs on from South Africa. "The first area that is in grave danger is orthodox Christian religion, in which we are taught that we are the only intelligent life in the universe. The existence of extraterrestrials could collapse religion."

Partridge believes the other intriguing question the UFO phenomenon raises is similarly fundamental: If we are not alone, then what is the intent of our visitors toward us, our lives and the planet?

"An outside threat is often the most unifying force for otherwise warring factions," he says. "Perhaps the arrival of aliens will inadvertently unite us as a species to finally work together for our common good." ☐

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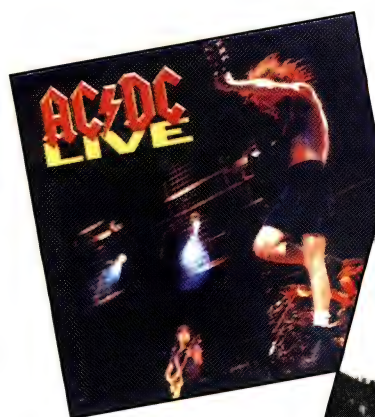
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Everybody's a Critic

► File libraries let Ebert wannabes review anything for the masses.

"All the world's a stage," wrote Shakespeare. "And everybody's a critic," the immortal bard might have added, had online services been available in Elizabethan England.

Not so long ago, criticism was the privilege of an elite few. Analyzing things was the province of scholars, scientists, journalists and those social gadflies known as "*bon vivants*." Think of any sort of criticism, and the image of a cranky George Bernard Shaw or an ironic Oscar Wilde springs to mind.

But interactive online communication, being the great social leveler that it is, is making critics of us all. Just as newspapers allowed mass audiences to regularly read criticism, such information services as CompuServe now enable masses of people to publish their own reviews.

Think about it. Most CompuServe members have, at one time or another, left a forum message that expresses a critical thought—even if only commenting on another member's message. But some CompuServe members are very serious about their online evaluations—whether the topic is music, art, literature, travel or any of a wide range of other human endeavors—posting their reviews in a forum library for all the electronic world to read.

Brooklyn, New York-based producer and director Donald Schwartz finds writing to be relaxing. He has written a review of New Orleans restaurants and other attractions for the Travel Forum (GO TRAVSIG) (see "Regular Joe Picks and Pans," p. 45, for a sample listing of review files). "I'm in the video production business, which like any

other business is filled with people who tap their watches and work under very specific agendas," he says. "With my reviews, it's only me, my schedule, my point of view, my style—no pressure."

Dean Waters, who scrutinizes New Age books and tapes in the New Age Forum (GO NEWAGE), feels that reviewing can be an intensely personal experience. "I write reviews when I have had a powerful positive or negative experience with a book or product," says Waters, a professional writer who lives in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Sometimes writing a review is just something Waters will want to do; other times, it's in response to a forum member's request for his opinion on a product. In either case, when his thoughts leave him sitting on the proverbial fence, he switches off his PC. "I tend not to make public comment when I am somewhere in the middle because I feel this tends to muddy the situation for someone looking for an answer," he says.

Roch Parisien, who writes a weekly music review column in the RockNet Forum (GO ROCKNET), says online criticism is an art that nearly anyone can engage in, as long as they have strong feelings on the subject. "No CompuServe member should be shy about posting a review of something that has moved him or her," says Parisien, who lives in Ottawa, Canada, and performs free-lance writing and media relations services for a living. "After all, shared information and viewpoints is what the whole CompuServe experience is about. I've certainly widened my own listening habits based on the tips and experiences of others, and I hope I've been able to do the same for them."

Lan Sluder, a Travel Forum section leader, believes that online reviews perform a service. Sluder, an Asheville, North Carolina-based professional travel writer whose work has appeared in such publications as *The Chicago Tribune*, *The New York Times* and the *Bangkok Post*, is particularly proud of the forum's "Hotel Postcard Reviews." The member-written online summaries offer firsthand evaluations of hotels around the world. Each review includes information on a hotel's rates, location, types of

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Big-Name Reviews

Critiques from CompuServers are plentiful online, but so are brand-name reviews, in various online databases.

Books—Book Review Digest (GO BOOKREVIEW) contains bibliographic references to and summaries of critiques of English-language adult and children's books since 1983. The database is searchable by title, author, publication date or publisher. Each search is \$5; retrieving a full reference is also \$5.

Movies—Check out which way Roger Ebert's famous thumb is pointing in his online film review database (GO EBERT) or read Hollywood Hotline's Movie Reviews (GO HOLLYWOOD). Both are a part of basic services.

Hardware and Software—Reviews from major computer magazines are available in Computer Database Plus (GO COMPDATABASE), as well as ZiffNet and ZiffNet/Mac's Editors Choice databases, with summary text from *PC Magazine* (GO EDCHOICE) or *MacWEEK* and *MacUser* (GO ZMC:EDCHOICE) rating best buys in many hardware and software categories. Additional charges to regular connect time apply. Please review pricing before accessing the databases. ZiffNet includes a monthly fee.

Home and Car—The basic service's *Consumer Reports* (GO CONSUMER) lets you pull up the text of product/service reports prepared for the popular magazine from Consumers Union. Categories of products cover appliances, automobiles, electronics and cameras, and home-related items.

Almost Everything—Reviews of books, movies, videos, restaurants, electronics and more can be found within the text of *Esquire*, *Playboy*, *Home Office Computing*, *Stereo Review* and many other titles found in Magazine Database Plus (GO MAGDB). Additional charges to regular connect time apply. Please review pricing before accessing the database.

'Beta Readers' and Other Professional Critiques

Cruel, stinging criticism can be fun to read, but constructive advice is generally more useful—especially for a beginner looking to launch an artistic or literary career.

Several forums help struggling artists gain confidence and skill through online critiques from seasoned professionals. The Photography Forum (GO PHOTOFORUM), for example, offers a special feature called Open Crit, which allows any member to upload a GIF image for analysis by the forum's experts.

Robert Gorrill, one of the forum's resident pros, says many members are willing to forego conventional wisdom on photographic techniques—the idea that “what others say is the only way to do things”—and upload their experiments for all to view and evaluate. “This provides the freedom of expression that you could not get when submitting images to judges in a competition run by a photographic association or camera club.”

In the Literary Forum (GO LITFORUM) budding novelists, short story writers and poets can take advantage of Section 14, “Literary Exercises,” to hone their talents in cooperation with other members. John Myers, a forum member since 1988, drew upon the contacts he developed there to jump-start his career. “I use a set of ‘beta readers’ with whom I share my writing,” says Myers, who published his first novel last October and now has another one in the works. “We send files either by CompuServe Mail or on diskette, and then read, comment and actually mark up the manuscripts and send them back.”

Myers says the members have provided him with priceless advice. “I probably could have gotten to this point on my own, but I got here *lots* faster through the online interaction and feedback.”

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum



Writing workshop hones skills: Brewster

(GO SCIFI) offers a formal online workshop that helps members develop their writing skills in a “virtual classroom” setting. The workshop, which meets in Section 15, is staffed by three “writers-in-residence.” Member Kent Brewster says the workshop, and the evaluations he received, helped him make his first professional sale.

After Brewster completed the workshop, a contact he made through the program alerted him to an editor—a CompuServe member—who was assembling a science fiction anthology for a major publisher. “I uploaded a short story called ‘The Dream Pirate’s Tale.’ I called him in the morning to ask if it came across OK. He said yes and that he wanted to buy it,” says Brewster.

He recently became the workshop’s first alumnus to serve as a guest professional, helping a new generation of science fiction writers. About his success he says, “I owe ... well, not *all* of it, but a huge chunk of it to the fact that I stumbled onto CompuServe.”

—JE

rooms, safety and other pertinent information. More than 500 reviews are scattered throughout the forum’s libraries.

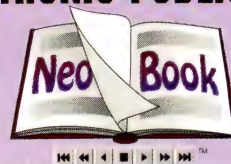
The quality of the Hotel Postcard Reviews varies. Some members take painstaking care in writing their opinions, providing great detail on the ups and downs of their hotel stays. Others, however, stay true to a postcard’s brevity and dash off a quick note. “We don’t do much editing of the files, preferring to let readers make their own judgments on whether the reviewer is being fair and whether the reviewer’s tastes are similar to that of the reader,” says Sluder.

Kevin Souza, who contributes cookbook

reviews to the Cooks Online Forum (GO COOKS), says his online articles help members cut through the bookstore clutter and find the exact titles they need. “There are so many cookbooks and they are becoming so expensive that forum members feel that reviews can offer some guideposts in the bibliographic culinary jungle,” notes Souza, who works as a medical research coordinator in San Francisco.

Fairness is an issue that concerns most critics, both offline and online. Paul Baker, who reviews jazz CDs in the Music and Arts Forum (GO MUSICARTS), feels that all writers bring some degree of bias to their

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GO IBMSYS, DOS Utilities Section, QM107D.ZIP

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word processors. "Every critic, reviewer, writer has a bias or two," says Baker, who became a jazz writer in 1988 after playing drums since 1972 and listening intensely to jazz since the early 1970s. "I'm sure my preferences are obvious in my writing. I tend to favor more experimental and risk-taking kinds of jazz."

Cookbook reviewer Souza notes that it helps to write for a knowledgeable audience. He sticks to his subject matter and the Cooks Online Forum because its members know him as well as his tastes. "They've tried my recipes and my cooking," Souza says. "When they read one of my reviews, they have a perspective from which to judge its fairness and viewpoint."

Indeed, fairness is the standard that any reviewer must adhere to, according to music reviewer Parisien. "Without fairness, there is no credibility; without credibility, the review is worth nothing." But he notes that "ultimately, a review is just one person's opinion

... albeit an informed opinion."

Most online authors appreciate feedback on their work, and the interactive nature of CompuServe helps to foster an ongoing dialogue between reviewers and fellow members. Parisien notes that online critics quickly can develop a following and are often considered experts by fellow members. "I've received lots of positive feedback on my reviews. They get lots of good discussions going. People often ask me to recommend stuff for them, which can be pretty tough sometimes."

Parisien feels that intellectual disputes between writers and readers are an integral part of the online reviews game—and much of the fun. "When readers take exception to what I've written," he says, "I always encourage them to post an alternate review. That's when the *really* good discussions get going."

New Age Forum writer Waters recalls that after he reviewed *The Tao of Pooh* by

Benjamin Hoff in a library file, he asked if other members had disliked the book. After some positive appraisals that matched his own, he says, "I finally got a few negative comments, mostly about how the book misrepresents Taoism on various points. It got quite a thread started."

Jazz critic Baker wishes more members would try their hand at writing online reviews. "It's too bad more people don't post articles in the libraries, particularly people who write well. Contributing is a way of educating one another, and the postings on CompuServe are often more honest than one might find in commercially available magazines because we're not subject to editorial pressure here."

John Edwards criticizes everything in his "Behind the Screens" column (GO OLT-130).

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Regular Joe Picks and Pans: Forum Files

Checkmate Tones—Hanon W. Russell and other guest reviewers provide their opinions on the latest books about chess play. Chess Forum (GO CHESSFORUM), Library 1, "General/Help," file names in format xxxxxx.REV (Approx. 4,000-8,000 bytes each).

German Cookbook Review—A review of *The German Cookbook* by Mimi Sheraton. Cooks Online Forum (GO COOKS), Library 15, "Tools and Books," GEBOOK.TXT (3,985 bytes).

Pasta Cookbook Review—A review of *The Pasta Book* by Julia Della Croce. Cooks Online Forum, Library 15, PASBOOK.TXT (2,496 bytes).

Great Cakes Review—A review of the cookbook by Carole Walter. Cooks Online Forum, Library 15, GRTCAK.TXT (2,012 bytes).

Games Reviews—Members of the Gamers Forum (GO GAMERS) rate the latest computer game releases from major makers in issues of *The Electronic Gamer*. Library 15, "TEG Magazine," contains reviews covering such titles as MicroProse's galaxy-conquering *Master of Orion* (MOO.REV, 7,258 bytes); Strategic Studies Group's *Warlords 2* (WARLD2.REV, 7,995 bytes); Three-Sixty Pacific and Electronic Arts' World War II strategy simulation *High Command: Europe 1935-1945* (HICOMM.REV, 6,856 bytes); LucasArts Entertainment's *X-Wing* add-on *Imperial Pursuit* (IMPUR.REV, 4,904 bytes); and Spectrum HoloByte's popular Macintosh CD-ROM game *Iron Helix* (HELIX.REV, 7,856 bytes).

Roots Reads—Virtually all of the files in the Genealogy Forum's (GO ROOTS) Library 12, "Book Reviews," are written by resident expert Martha Reamy, and examine dozens of genealogical titles and indexes, covering specific family names, geographic regions and historical topics. File names in format xxxxxx.RVW (approx. 2,000-4,000 bytes each).

Bearcat Scanner Review—A review of the Bearcat 890XLT radio scanner. Ham Radio Forum (GO HAMNET), Library 2, "Scanning Library," BC890.TXT (36,091 bytes).

Recent European Jazz Releases—Jazz music with a Continental flavor. Music and Arts Forum (GO MUSICARTS), Library 4, "Jazz/Big Bands," EUROPE.TXT (13,342 bytes).

Folk Music Reviews—Folk music reviews from the pages of the *Fiddle & Bow* newsletter. Music and Arts Forum, Library 7, "Country/Folk," FOLKCD.TXT (3,509 bytes).

Tarot Deck Reviews—Reviews of Tarot card decks from various manufacturers. New Age Forum (GO NEWAGE), Library 13, "Tarot/Astrology," REVIEW.ZIP (5,120 bytes).

Concert Reviews—Looks at recent performances by the music world's latest and greatest, penned by "Lizard King." RockNet Forum (GO ROCKNET), Library 0, "General/Misc," file names in format xxxx94.CON and xxxx93.CON (approx. 4,000 bytes each).

Roch on Music—The text of Roch Parisien's syndicated review of new album releases is uploaded each week, covering everything from obscure local bands in New York and Canada to visible up-and-comers to big international artists. RockNet Forum, Library 0, file names in format ROCHxx.REV (approx. 5,000 bytes each).

Movie Reviews—Film critic Richard Montanari offers his newspaper reviews of current films. ShowBiz Forum (GO SHOWBIZ), Library 2, "New/Recent Films," file names in format xxxxxx.REV (approx. 4,000 bytes each).

Play's the Thing—Critics Nathan Hull (*Actors Resource*) and Harvy Karten (*Humanities News*) look at what's big and bad in New York City.

ShowBiz Forum, Library 11, "Theater/Stage." Search library using the keyword REVIEW for all reviews, or HULL or KARTEN for Broadway or off-Broadway reviews, respectively.

New Orleans Review—A review of restaurants and other attractions in "The Big Easy." Travel Forum (GO TRAVSIG), Library 1, "United States," NEWORL.WKD (6,453 bytes).

Postcard Reviews, U.S. Hotels—Members' views of various major U.S. hotel chains. Travel Forum, Library 1, CARDS.USA (17,567 bytes).

Postcard Reviews, U.K. Hotels—Members' views of British hotels. Travel Forum, Library 8, "Europe," CARDS.UK (13,203 bytes).

Puff the Magic Stogie—Shel Belinkoff gives others a taste of the best cigars, with personal reviews and notes from online Blind Cigar Tastings. Wine and Beer Forum (GO WINE), Library 17, "Cigars/Pipes," file names in format xxxxxx.RVW (approx. 2,000-15,000 bytes). ☐

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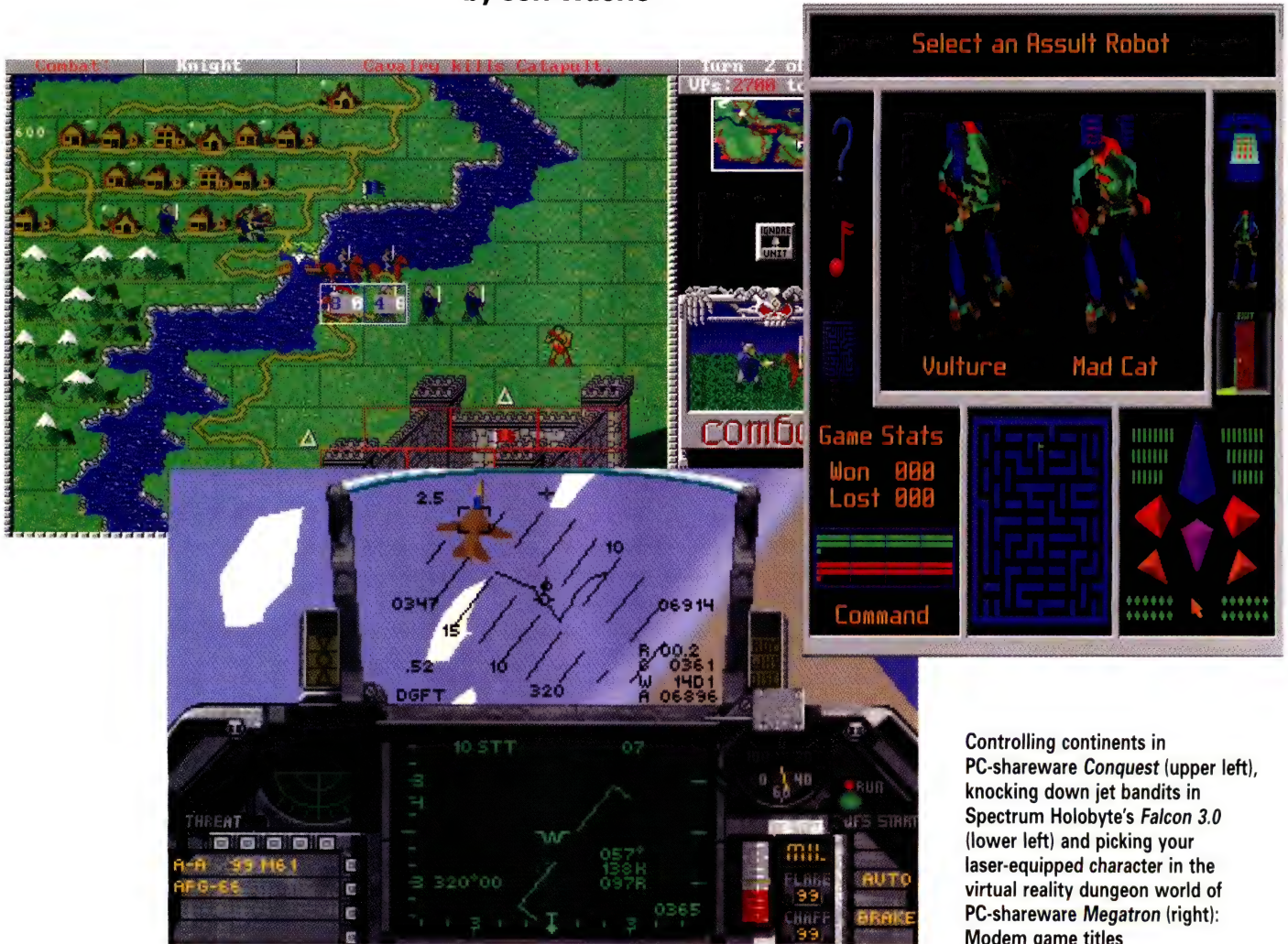


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Controlling continents in PC-shareware *Conquest* (upper left), knocking down jet bandits in Spectrum HoloByte's *Falcon 3.0* (lower left) and picking your laser-equipped character in the virtual reality dungeon world of PC-shareware *Megatron* (right): Modem game titles

Happy Adversary

► It's no longer man vs. PC as modem gaming gives you live rivals.

You're locked in a tense dogfight that flashes across your computer screen. You sense your opponent on your tail, so you bank and drop into a steep dive. Your adversary follows, his bullets zipping past your cockpit. You pull out of the dive and bank sharply in the opposite direction. Still, the enemy sticks with you, staying on your tail as though he can anticipate your every move.

That scenario would paint a flattering portrait of a computer game's ability to react, but more and more computer gamers are locking up with a far more formidable opponent—another living, thinking human being—thanks to the burgeoning popularity of modem-to-modem gaming.

As the name suggests, modem-to-modem gaming allows players in separate locations to play against one another by using a modem connection to create a shared game space. The system is actually quite straightforward—all that's necessary is game software, modem-equipped computers and a telephone link connecting the players.

Modem gamers can hook up either through a direct telephone link or using the CompuServe network.

Flight simulations, such as Spectrum HoloByte's popular *Falcon 3.0*, are among the most widely played modem games. While they have greater hardware demands than other games—players suggest *Falcon* works best at 9,600 bps—flight simulation devotees claim the excitement, realism and challenge of flying against a "real" opponent make conventional human-vs.-computer simulations seem pale by comparison.

"It's easy to immerse oneself in the game. Your adrenaline rushes, your heart pounds, your palms sweat—put simply, players give themselves over body and soul to the challenge at hand and the heat of combat," says Victor "Duke" Zaveduk of Chicago, section leader of the *Falcon* Challenge Ladder in the Modem Games Forum (GO MODEM-GAMES).

"There is nothing that compares to matching wits with a human opponent," agrees Joe "Mustang" Savlan of Queens, New

York, another forum member. "The strategic aspects of war are often compared to a chess game, as one person tries to outmaneuver and outthink his opponent. Now I can identify with that comparison."

Most modem-gaming fans also agree that one of the genre's biggest lures is its simple ability to connect people with one another. That, they point out, contradicts the stereotype of computer gaming being a solitary, even lonely, pursuit.

"Modem games have bridged computer gaming—often charged with being an antisocial form of entertainment—with traditional gaming by adding back that important missing quality of social interaction," says Mike Schoenbach of North Bellmore, New York, manager of the Modem Games Forum. "Playing games alone or against the computer can be great fun, but they just don't satisfy our need to be social."

Growing interest in modem gaming has spawned a variety of other game genres. Players can choose from everything from war and strategy games, such as Microprose's

RANDOM ACCESS

'80s Again? Heading Back to the Arcade

Amid the striking realism and interaction of modem-to-modem gaming and the 400-page manuals that many popular games carry these days, it's still possible to turn back to a simpler time, when all you wanted to do was defend the universe with one laser gun or avoid being gobbled up by some blob with an eating disorder.

A stroll through several CompuServe games-related forum libraries reveals more and more shareware uploads that are similar to old-line arcade games such as *Asteroids*, *Space Invaders* and other early 1980s classics. That, say the authors of these new versions of old favorites, shouldn't be surprising—as computer gaming becomes increasingly complex and demanding, players still appreciate a game that's easy to learn and enjoy.

"These games satisfy (players) and give them a few minutes' break before they go back to work," explains Yutaka Emura of Tsukuba, Japan, who created the shareware titles *Block Breaker* and *EmPipe*.

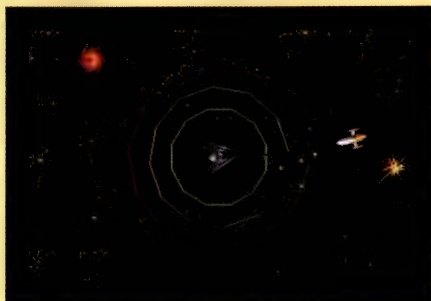
Kent Rollins, who authored *ABM Command*, says he consciously patterned the game after the nuclear-defense arcade game *Missile Command*. After nine months' work, in which he incorporated suggestions and feedback from various players, he unloaded the final version. "I've gotten re-

sponses from all across the United States—and even one from a guy in England who said his kids really like playing it."

Sam Puckett of Hollywood, Florida, and inventor of the shareware game *Galacta*, freely acknowledges that he was an arcade junkie: "I was a champion *Zaxxon* player, loved *Phoenix*, enjoyed *Galaxian* and turned over *Gorf* once or twice. My parents had to nail the quarters down if they wanted to keep me in the house."

Galacta holds a player's interest by constantly upgrading the weapons used in the game and introducing new aliens, says Puckett. He doesn't believe, however, that old-line classic games would have any sort of abiding popularity if they were released today. "I don't think something like *Space Invaders* would go anywhere these days. Too dull. Once you've seen the first screen, you've seen them all, and today's players need to be stimulated. But you can still borrow a game style and add what's necessary. After all, what are *Commander Keen* or *Jill of the Jungle* but spruced-up versions of *Donkey Kong*?"

Here's a sampling of popular arcade-like games available for downloading:



Space blast from the past: *Cyclone*

Maelstrom 1.3—A 256-color, fast-paced, nerve-wracking sendup of *Asteroids* that won the 1993 Shareware Industry Award for best Mac program. Macintosh Entertainment Forum (GO MACFUN), Library 2, "Arcade/Action Games," MAELST.INS (799,744 bytes).

SpaceInvader!—Full-screen color action, one of a number of implementations of the alien-attack genre. Macintosh Entertainment Forum, Library 2, SPAINV.SEA (270,208 bytes).

Cyclone—An excellent shareware take on the old arcade game *Star Castle*, with 3-D rendered graphics, great sound and added features including a challenge level. Macintosh Entertainment Forum, Library 2, CYCLON.SIT (901,376 bytes).

Bandit—New version of *Bandit*, an arcade-style shoot-'em-up space game. IBM New Users Forum (GO IBMNEW), Library 6, "General Fun and Games," BANDIT.ZIP (51,186 bytes).

ABM Command—A Windows version of the old Atari classic *Missile Command*, as faithful as possible to the original. Windows Fun Forum (GO WINFUN), Library 3, "Other Games/Fun," ABM.ZIP (30,508 bytes).

Block Breaker—Remember *Breakout*? This tribute has configurable sounds (WAV or MIDI) and block patterns. Windows Fun Forum, Library 3, BLC313.ZIP (54,376 bytes).

—JW

Command Headquarters to old-time favorites such as card games, checkers and chess (modem gamers recommend Interplay's *Battle Chess*).

One relative newcomer to the field is role-playing games, computer versions of the popular real-world adventure games that combine play-acting with wargame scenarios. Players define their character's attributes, in qualities such as strength, personality and fighting skill, and lead them through medieval dungeons, battlefield skirmishes or other plots. QQP's *Conquered Kingdoms* is one popular modem strategy title: In it, two armies of swordsmen, knights and "magical units," such as trolls and ogres, face off for domination of castles and entire towns.

Sports simulation is another genre in which modem gaming is establishing a toe-hold: Merit Software's *Tom Landry Strategy Football* and MicroProse's golfing *Greens* are successful entries. The sports-play field should keep expanding, says Marc Dultz, executive editor of *Strategy Plus* and *Interactive Computer Entertainment* magazines.

"There just aren't many (titles) right now, so I think those will be the big wave in gaming over the next couple of years."

Players who immerse themselves in the world of interactive modem gaming often uncover an intensely competitive atmosphere. They take their play seriously: More than 50 *Falcon* "pilots" maintain an ongoing competitive ladder in which players challenge one another. Any pilot who challenges another higher on the ladder and wins moves ahead of the vanquished opponent on a ratings scale.

The top-gunning atmosphere breeds its fair share of posturing and swagger. Jim Wesley of Linden, New Jersey, an avid player of *Empire Deluxe*, a popular war and strategy game, says a recent contest allowed players to indulge in a bit of propagandizing. "That's the best part!" exclaims Wesley. "Because of bad starts, a cease fire was negotiated. During this time, skirmishes broke out. Writing in newspaper style, we all wrote propaganda stories blaming, lying and exaggerating about who started it and the outcome. They were quite amusing."

Players also point out that the mock beligerence doesn't preclude close friendships being formed as a result of modem play. "In the final analysis, it's the players, rather than the game, that have contributed to the success of the ladder," says Zaveduk. "Many deep friendships have grown out of the competition. I've received offers of a place to stay almost anywhere in the United States as the result of my online interactions."

Finding a worthy opponent is easy: Players can leave and respond to challenges in the Modem Games Forum's message sections, or meet up with a virtual nemesis in the MTM Gaming Lobby (GO MTM-LOBBY)—an extension of the forum that is similar to a conference environment, where players talk and then retire to the equivalent of a private group to play the game.

Unfortunately, not all is perfect in the fast-developing world of modem gaming. Perhaps due to the speed with which the games have grown, technical glitches can be commonplace. Some games reportedly have a tendency to crash, and modem-gaming experts often urge players to routinely save

Head-to-Head Shareware: Modem Game Uploads

Here's a sampling of modem games and files available for downloading from the Modem Games Forum (GO MODEMGAMES).

Modem-capable Games—Comprehensive listing of all modem-capable games, both commercial and shareware/freeware. Library 1, "General/Help Files," MTMLST.TXT (33,244 bytes).

Ground War—Two-player tank game, via null modem or direct connect. Excellent graphics with digitized playing fields and variable tank speed. Re-create the Desert Storm tank scenario as Allies square off against the Iraqis. Library 4, "Tank Simulations and Games," GRWAR2.ZIP (112,315 bytes).

LineWars—The latest version of this 3-D space wars game. Pilot a Cobra Mark IV multipurpose vehicle equipped with energy shield, missiles and lasers. Library 5, "Space Simulations and Games," LWR152.ZIP (79,768 bytes).

Megatron—Graphically detailed new modem game. Compete in a randomly drawn labyrinth and try to be the first to locate and destroy either the computer or modem opponent. Library 5, MEGTRN.ZIP (533,992 bytes).

Space Shades—3-D graphics space combat simulator that supports modem-to-modem play. *Space Shades* places you in the cockpit of a space cruiser. You control your ship, a space station and a spy remote while exploring planets in preparation for your encounter with a hostile enemy. Library 5, SHADES.ZIP (145,124 bytes).

Starship Battle—Two captains can engage in battle, each with their own ship on their own computer. A graphical interface supplies controls, data readouts and reports from the crew. Library 5, SB100E.ZIP (128,000 bytes).

Warspace—A two-player space battle simulation. Hard-hitting play and story inspired by the *Star Trek* series, with eight different races to choose from and many stars and planets to visit. Library 5, WARPSP.ZIP (263,571 bytes).

Modern Conquest—A strategy/conquest game from Several Dudes Holistic Gaming. Land, sea and armor units compete for territory and, on the same order as *Empire*, allow players to exchange turns via modem. A map editor for map creation is available for \$20 registration. Library 6, "Strategy/Conquest," MODCNO.ZIP (131,621 bytes).

Siege! for Windows—Strategy modem game with the object of controlling the most territory after a given number of turns. May be played head-to-head via

modem, on a network or as a stand-alone game. Library 6, SIEGE.ZIP (200,562 bytes).

Ball Race—This fun, arcade-like game demands skill and strategy. Players compete to finish first, all the while dodging inert balls and opponent's mines while attempting to hit energy balls and keep shields up. Library 10, "Arcade Games," BALRAC.ZIP (29,680 bytes).

Modem Battleship—This excellent game has every conceivable option, including the fact that only one player need run the program, allowing telegaming between unlike computers. Library 11, "Other Modem Games," BATTLE.ARC (106,120 bytes).



Gulf battle re-creation: *Ground War*



Tanks trade Day-Glo fire in Mac cyberspace: *Spectre*

ongoing games to avoid the necessity of having to start over.

Technical assistance, like the good-natured taunts, is commonly exchanged between players. Canadian Terry Hooper of Regina, Saskatchewan, bought *Falcon* only to have both the game and his computer freeze when he tried to play via modem. He posted a note in the Modem Games Forum asking for suggestions about a modem upgrade that would solve the problem. "All in all, I'd have to say that using the forum saved me frustration and provided some confidence in making subsequent decisions that was valuable to me."

Things seem to be improving: Modem games manufacturers are reducing the number of technical glitches through better programming and beta-testing. And aficionados believe the best may be yet to come. Players say games continually are becoming more and more lifelike, from the performance and reproduction of the games themselves to the perspective and feel they offer the player.

"The realism is quite amazing," says Modem Games Forum

member Randy Michal of Spring Valley, California. "For example, in *Falcon 3.0* in the high-fidelity flight model, the F-16 you are flying has exactly the same flight characteristics as the real thing. Also, most simulations capable of modem play have the user 'sitting' in the vehicle, looking out on a virtual reality. In *Spectre*, I find myself feeling as though I'm sitting in the tank looking out."

Others, however, suggest that better graphics will not necessarily ensure that a

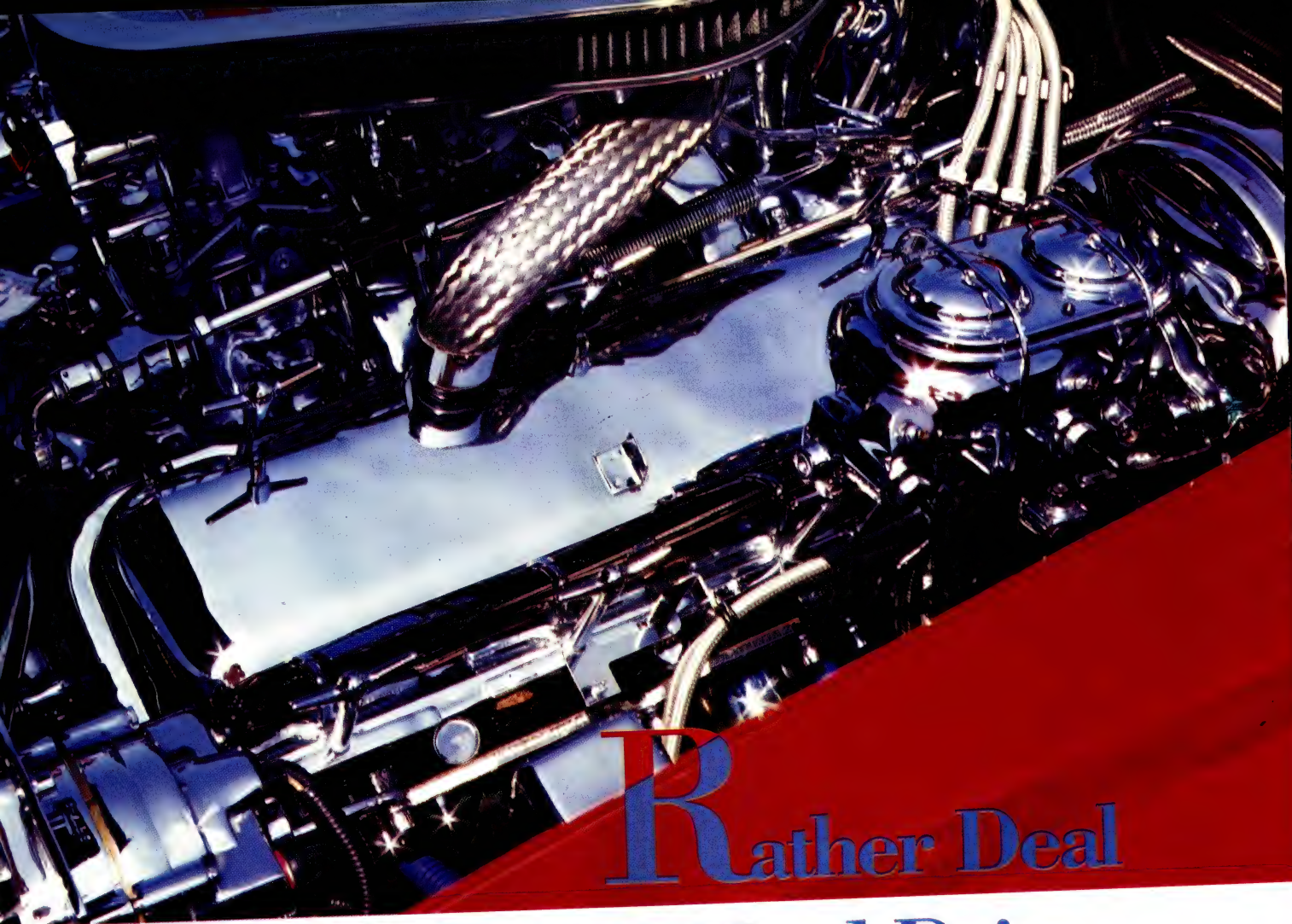
game will attract a wide and loyal audience. Dultz says modem-games players want what games players always have wanted—an enjoyable, challenging pastime that holds their interest. That, he says, is what modem-games developers and manufacturers ultimately will aim for in upcoming releases.

"Games can have super graphics, but, if all you do is win, that game is going to end up on the shelf," he says.

Yasmin Naboa, sales and marketing manager for New World Computing, which produces *Empire Deluxe*, also suggests that modem play will become a much more common feature of upcoming games releases. That, she says, goes back to players' desire to compete against one another and modem gaming's capacity to meet that need.

"I think most of the games that you'll see will have a modem feature," she says. "People just want to play against other people." ☺

Jeff Wuorio is the author of *Adult on Board* (Viking Penguin, 1994), a compendium of travel games for grown-ups. His CompuServe User ID number is 71311,2521.



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Downloadable Notables is a monthly catalog of new and interesting uploads from various forums researched and compiled by Associate Editor Chris Galvin. If you'd like to suggest a file for mention, send the full forum file description (including file name, size, title, keywords and summary) along with a brief note explaining why it caught your fancy to CompuServe User ID 71154,74. *Do not send the file itself.* Note: Many mentioned program files are shareware; view full descriptions online for details. File names are listed in ALL CAPS. If you cannot locate a file, check the forum's announcements for late changes or post a message to *SYSOP.

Car Talk—There are miles of fun and informative files in the Automobile Forum (GO CARS), everything from info on renting in Europe to GIFs of classic, new and futuristic "concept" cars to jokes about cars and drivers. Library 4, "What Ails It?," has numerous guides to tinkering and fixing, including ideas on valve adjustments, building your own brake fluid changer/bleeder, diagnosing an engine with a vacuum gauge and detoxing a car formerly owned by a heavy smoker.

VLVADJ.TXT (3,401 bytes)
MBLEED.TXT (3,248 bytes)
VACUUM.TXT (1,173 bytes)
SMOKE.TXT (6,873 bytes)

Library 13, "Technical Trends," has info on changes in car design, regulations and products, including two files describing replacements for the coolant freon and new environmentally friendly antifreezes, as well as a GIF of General Motors' Impact electric car that claims zero-to-60 mph in eight seconds.

FREONY.TXT (9,400 bytes) and
FREON3.TXT (47,200 bytes)
GLYCOL.TXT (2,763 bytes) and
SIERRA.TXT (21,361 bytes)
GMCONB.GIF (91,389 bytes)

A Lot of PC Utility—Perk up your productivity on a PC with time-saving utilities from the IBM Systems Forum (GO IBMSYS). Library 1, "DOS Utilities," now includes the INPUT interactive utility for batch files from the Steenburgh's Stuff collection, and a hard disk one-step partition and formatting program that lets you select a cluster size.

INPUTX.ZIP (37,821 bytes)
TSUTIL.ZIP (154,294 bytes)

Library 3, "General Utils," has Wipe-Out, which eliminates information regarding deleted Windows and DOS applications in INI and CFG files, and the SCROLLit buffer TSR, which lets you roll back through lines of text that have moved off your screen.

WIPE-O.ZIP (52,729 bytes)
SCRLIT.ZIP (45,456 bytes)

Library 7, "Desktop Utils," offers Paul-Munoz Coleman's Personal Calendar PIM, with printable appointment reminders, clock, notepad and more; a "fake phone" executable that lets you end long-winded telephone conversations; and RateClock, an always-on-top application that tells you how much you've spent in CompuServe's extended services while online.

PERCAL.ZIP (192,231 bytes)
PHONE.EXE (10,368 bytes)
RATE15.ZIP (24,004 bytes)

Mac Amusements—Revisit the Macintosh Entertainment Forum (GO MACFUN) for the latest in Mac diversions. Library 2, "Arcade/ Action Games," includes *Dream-Light's Vertice*, which challenges you to redirect excess energy from a reactor along "laser light" lattices to waiting power nodes,

as well as *Quagmire*, a *Dark-Castle*-type animated adventure in which you're a robot charged with saving a great scientist.

VERTTL.BIN (600,576 bytes)
QUAGMI.SEA (641,152 bytes)

Library 3, "Adventure/War Games," has the Party World HyperCard games (the original and a sequel), in which a player encounters unicorns, enchanted notes and a "Chipmunk King."

PTYWLD.CPT (1,196,928 bytes)
PTYWLD.SEA (226,432 bytes)

Library 4, "Board/Ed/Card Games," features FloorTiles, a fun *Tetris*-ish game of quick-thinking; *GNU Chess Pro*, a makeover of the 1991 classic; and *Blit!*, an animated jigsaw-puzzle game with 12 levels and digitized sound.

FLOORT.SIT (64,128 bytes)

This Month's FILE CLUSTER

Hang 10 bps, dude, it's the ultimate in info-surfing: the File Cluster, consisting of uploads from various forums all searchable by the same keyword. This month: This kind of chain is nature's law, these stamps help feed the needy; its poisoning will make you green, unless for thought you're "eating": FOOD

Nutrition and Cancer—An excerpt from a 1990 *Longevity* magazine article about the role of dietary Vitamin E in preventing cancer. Cancer Forum (GO CANCER), VITMNE.TXT in Library 8, "Research Library" (1,327 bytes).

Myth of Evaporation—Does alcohol in prepared foods always burn off completely? Read this article from a dietary science journal and find out. Cooks Online Forum (GO COOKS), ALRET.TXT in Library 14, "Nutrition" (8,684 bytes).

Fast Garden Food—Recipes for quick-prepare meals based on freezer-stored foods from your backyard patch. Includes Garden Pizza, Vegetable Soup and Eggplant Lasagna. Gardening Forum (GO GARDEN), FASTFD.ZIP in Library 4, "Herbs/Recipes" (5,754 bytes).

Food for Thought—Are you ready for the unexpected? Disaster preparedness, including tips on water, cooking and car survival, is explained. Health & Fitness Forum (GO GOOD-HEALTH), PREPAR.TXT in Library 17, "Self Help/Support" (10,961 bytes).

Raytrace Meal—A former Hall of Fame GIF image from the Graphics Development Forum (GO GRAPHDEV), this work features a salami and cheese wedge on a dish, with a completed sandwich in the foreground. SNACK.GIF in Library 3, "Hall of Fame" (136,533 bytes).



Burger HAMS—Radio enthusiasts on the Ham Radio Forum (GO HAMNET) listen to *everything*, even the low-power wireless communications used at fast-food drive-thru windows. This file explains the systems and lists scanner frequencies based on Chicago-area restaurants. Other files detail individual chains. FOODSV.DOC in Library 2, "Scanning Library" (12,311 bytes).

Recipe Maker—This Windows application makes grocery shopping, meal planning and recipe organization easier. IBM Applications Forum (GO IBMAPP), RCPWN3.ZIP in Library 7, "Gen. Apps" (77,855 bytes).

Space Melee—*Galactic Food Fight* is a VGA game in which you "conquer" worlds of food. IBM New Users Forum (GO IBMNEW), GFF.ZIP in Library 6, "Gen. Fun & Games" (53,064 bytes).

Recessionary Recipes—Members of the Investors Forum (GO INVFORUM) discussed stretching meal budgets without compromising taste in this 1992 thread. REFOOD.THD in Library 8, "Theory/Commentary" (26,217 bytes).

Soup and Sake—Ken Love, a former reviewer for a Chicago newspaper, put together this Macintosh HyperCard stack listing 1,555 Japanese restaurants in the United States with notes on his favorites. Japan Forum (GO JAPAN), SUSHI.DD in Library 15, "Food & Drink" (155,088 bytes).

GCHPRO.SEA (161,152 bytes)
BLIT.SIT (238,592 bytes)

Speaking Up—Get involved with government in the Political Debate Forum (GO POLITICS), especially with uploads from watchdog groups Common Cause and the League of Women Voters. Library 1, "We the People," now contains the first issue of an electronic magazine devoted to presenting bills pending in the U.S. Congress; public-domain information from the 1990 U.S. Census; the manifesto of the Third Millennium twentysomething interest group; and a complete phone/address directory to the 102nd Congress.

WE.ZIP (101,156 bytes)
CENSUS.ZIP (30,100 bytes)
GENX.TXT (35,969 bytes)
CONGRE.DIR (103,448 bytes)

FDA BBS—Here's info about and directions for logging onto the U.S. Food & Drug Administration's toll-free bulletin board. Journalism Forum (GO JFORUM), FDABBS.TXT in Library 4, "Journalism Tools" (28,010 bytes).

Beantown Eats—Originally created for attendees of the 1993 MacWorld Expo, this guide to dining in Boston by Digital Vision is helpful to any visitor. Macintosh Community Club Forum (GO MACCLUB), Library 3, "Parties/Cons," BOSRES.SIT (3,712 bytes).

HyperCard Kitchen—Two great non-demo Mac stacks cover Robin Seer's 100-plus nutritional recipes and helpful tips, and Erik Marcus' complete vegetarian resource on diet, ecology and the environment. Macintosh Hypertext Forum (GO MACHYPER), Library 6, "Reference Stacks," DESREC.SIT (94,464 bytes) and VEGI.SIT (458,368 bytes).

Delicious Music—A list of song titles from past years having to do with eating and drinking. Music/Arts Forum (GO MUSICARTS), EATIT.TXT in Library 8, "Pop/Rock" (11,964 bytes).

For the Birds—Two files from the Outdoors Forum (GO OUTDOORS) describe feathered-friend feeding: advice on buying seed and suet and tips on keeping industrious squirrels off the feeder. Library 8, "Birding," BFOOD2.COL (7,907 bytes) and VANDAL.COL (8,349 bytes).

Kitty-Kitty, Din-Din!—Three informative files about cat food from the Pets/Animal Forum (GO PETS): a list of percentages of protein, fat, ash and more in brands of premium cat food; a recipe for a homemade chicken-liver paté treat; and dietary and other considerations for elderly cats with kidney disease. CATPCT.TXT in Library 4, "Cat Library" (1,384 bytes), PATE.TXT (1,547

Library 16, "The Congress," contains sample letters to send in opposition to the FCC's proposed \$6 per hour modem tax.

NOTAX.ZIP (45,951 bytes)

Coming Soon—Fans of multimedia and the movies should browse ShowBiz Forum's (GO SHOWBIZ) new Library 6, "Hollywood Online," which contains multimedia kits, "electronic magazines" and short film clips promoting the latest releases. Windows and Macintosh versions of the kits and clips are available (clips are in QuickTime format; Windows users need the QuickTime for Windows Player and extensions sold by Apple to view them). Files generally range in size from 150,000 to 900,000 bytes.

bytes) and KIDNEY.TXT (16,914 bytes).

Fudged Fiction—"Light Food," a short story about what happens when someone attempts to remove calories from chocolate. Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum (GO SCIFI), DIET.TXT in Library 14, "Fiction/Working Mss" (11,812 bytes).

Joe Bob on Taste—B-movie reviewer Joe Bob Briggs' weekly columns are uploaded to the ShowBiz Forum (GO SHOWBIZ); this early 1993 article noted how food company "marketing geniuses" gave the go-ahead for food to taste good. AMER.D18 in Library 13, "MST3K/Comedy" (3,389 bytes).

Animal Quest—This PC game lets you discover the world of a food-chain ecology: You become a selected animal and see how well you survive based on avoiding natural predators and capturing prey. Students' Forum (GO STUFO), Library 12, "Math/Science/Tech," AQUEST.ZIP (375,110 bytes).

Windows Nutrition—This database of food stuffs includes info on calories, protein, carbohydrates, calcium and more. It calculates percentage of calories from each nutrient and compiles a daily food log in an easy interface. Windows Shareware Forum (GO WINSHARE), NUTRBS.ZIP in Library 12, "Gen. Win. Apps" (150,627 bytes).

What Goes With Pepperoni?—Matching the right wine with the dish being served is a familiar topic in the Wine and Beer Forum (GO WINEFORUM), and these two files—from an online conference and a *New York Times* writer—detail the art. Library 4, "Food & Wine," COOKCO.RG (35,641 bytes) and MATCH.NYT (6,770 bytes).

Unique Windows—Sysops in the Zenith Forum (GO ZENITH) assemble the most interesting utilities and programs for Windows in Library 15, "Windows." New entries include Music Sculptor, a MIDI synthesizer that lets you play, record and edit music without an external MIDI keyboard with a complement of instruments and sound effects.

WINMUS.ZIP (178,285 bytes)

Sounds & Sight is a full-featured GIF viewer that plays WAV-format sounds simultaneously, permitting the creation of slide shows and storyboards.

SSVWR.ZIP (193,902 bytes)

Design your own business cards with Rockford, which utilizes Windows fonts, clip art, lines and boxes, and lets you print cards or a mock-up for your print shop.

RCKFRD.ZIP (126,672 bytes)

WinOCR gives you low-cost optical character recognition capabilities by reading text in BMP files produced by scanners.

WINOCR.ZIP (234,085 bytes)

Periodic Table for Windows is a comprehensive rundown of the elements, showing structures and decay trees, and providing tutorials and data on more than 800 isotopes.

PTWIN2.ZIP (310,445 bytes)

Homeworking Advice—There's no shortage of practical information in the Working From Home Forum (GO WORK), and if you miss any, some of the more pertinent threads are archived in the libraries. Library 2, "Business Info," contains recent discussions on finding motivation amidst self-employment, incorporating a business, thoughts on determining retainer fees for clients, and helpful tips on saving money on various telecommunications services.

MOTIVA.TXT (10,642 bytes)

INC.TXT (16,262 bytes)

RETAIN.TXT (18,539 bytes)

HOME-O.TXT (12,053 bytes)

Other libraries include files on joining the information broker profession and comparing accounting software.

IB.TXT in Library 4, "Info Professionals," (7,475 bytes)

ACCTSW.TXT in Library 9, "Accounting & Tax," (149,135 bytes)

Following are summaries of hardware and software reviews available for reading this month in *Online Today*. To read the complete reviews, use the GO commands listed at the end of each summary.

Hardware

Computerized High Fidelity Music

Hello!Music! (Yamaha Corp. of America) is a MIDI tone generator and accompanying software for Windows and Macintosh computers. The tone generator is about the size of a car stereo and attaches to the computer without the need of an internal card. GO OLT-4300 for Hardin Brothers' review of this new music system, which, he says, produces better quality sound than most of its competitors. For additional information, visit the MIDI/Music Forum (GO MIDI).

ALL
OF US
HAVE THE
ABILITY
TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.



Software

Improved Presentation Graphics

Harvard Graphics for Windows 2.0 is Software Publishing Corp.'s attempt to regain its reputation as the best program available for presentation graphics. GO OLT-3745 for William J. Lynott's review, which will help you decide if this really is the best available. For additional information and support, visit the Software Publishing Corp. Forum (GO SPCFORUM).

More Presentation Graphics

WordPerfect Presentations for Windows 2.0 (WordPerfect Corp.) is another advanced presentation graphics program with many unique features. GO OLT-3755 for William J. Lynott's review, which compares this program to such competing programs as Harvard Graphics, Aldus Persuasion and Lotus Freelance. Visit the WordPerfect forums (GO WORDPERFECT) for additional information and support.

Creative Whacks in Windows

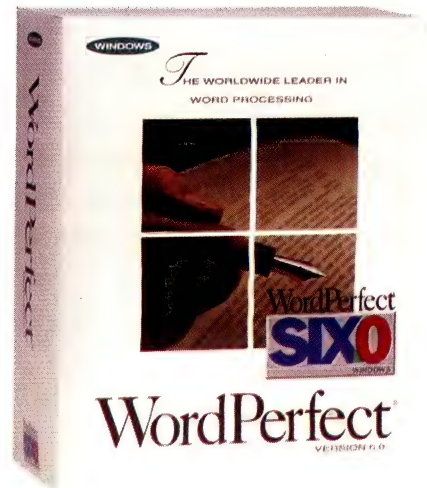
Creative Whack Pack (Creative Think) is a Windows program that will spur your creative thinking. It forces users to approach problems from new directions by presenting Whack cards and asking questions. GO OLT-3825 for Christy Brothers' review, which praises the concept of this package, but finds several problems with the program.

Faster Windows and DOS Printing

If you are tired of waiting while your computer slowly sends data to your printer, you might need PrintCache 3.1 (LaserTools). GO OLT-3785 for Christy Brothers' review, which will help you determine how fast your printer could run with the right software installed. Visit the Windows 3rd Party E Forum (GO WINAPE) for additional information and support.

Image Management

The Kodak Shoebox 1.0 (Eastman Kodak Co.) stores, sorts and catalogs photographs and other images on Macintosh computers. This initial version has a few problems, according to Anthony Watkins' review, plus many excellent features. If you need to keep track of hundreds or thousands of images, GO OLT-3815 to see if this program will help you. GO KODAK for additional information and support.



Top-Ranked Word Processor

WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows (WordPerfect Corp.) includes advanced word processing, document management, spreadsheet and drawing features. It boasts more than 600 enhancements, many of which are discussed in James Moran's review (GO OLT-3735), which compares it to the DOS version of the same program as well as other top word processors. For more information and support, visit the WordPerfect forums (GO WORDPERFECT).

Snooping Through Your Computer

With WinSleuth Gold Plus (Dariana Software), you can diagnose your computer from Windows. GO OLT-3795 for Franklyn Jones' review, which describes the package and the kinds of users who will find this program useful.

Advanced Accounting

Despite its primitive-sounding name, Abacus 2.1 (A.S. Inc.) is an advanced accounting package for IBM computers. Available in both single-user and LAN versions, it may be just what you need. GO OLT-3805 to read Harry Green's review, which will help you decide if this is the program for your small or medium-sized business.

And Still More

If your needs are modest, you don't need to spend hundreds of dollars to create charts and graphs. GO OLT-3765 for Franklyn Jones' review of My Charts for Windows (My Software Co.), which might have all the power you need at a very low price.

Catching Conflicts on the Macintosh

Conflicts between startup files seem almost inevitable on any well-stocked Macintosh. You can avoid those conflicts with Conflict Catcher II (Casady & Greene). Anthony Watkins' review (GO OLT-3775) explains how this program works and compares it with competing file managers.



I HOPE BILL
BOUGHT ME THAT
GOLD WATCH...

I WONDER IF
SHE'LL LIKE THE
MICROWAVE
OVEN?

He was on the PC again last night; lately, I never see Bill [sigh]. But if he got me the watch...

I could barely tear myself away...what variety! Over 250,000 items from popular name-brand manufacturers. Not an easy decision, but Marge could really use a microwave.

I hope he found Shoppers Advantage.® Then he would've saved 10% to 50% off the manufacturer's list price. Not just on watches and jewelry, but toys, tools, furnishings, appliances...

I just typed GO SAC online. You don't even have to be a member. But when I saw

the extra savings they get, I joined. Now I've got a Low Price Guarantee, in case Marge finds that microwave for less someplace else. And, we've got Automatic Two-Year Warranty Protection!**

Oh no...he probably got me an appliance. Well, he can log back on for that watch any time. This is one store that's truly open at our convenience...

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GO OLI for more information

"This database gives us the big picture in liver transplantation."



System 1032 provides specialized power for a variety of specialized 4GL/RDBMS needs. Like the University of Pittsburgh's Epidemiology Data Center, which maintains the most comprehensive Liver Transplantation Database in the U.S. The Center's work has led to a better understanding of liver disease and transplantation—and at its heart is System 1032, from CompuServe Data Technologies.

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Amoroso says. "Because System 1032 allows us to do so much, so quickly, we can have a smaller, but more productive staff."

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Dr. William Amoroso
Director of Computing & Research Associate
Epidemiology Data Center
University of Pittsburgh

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FEBRUARY 1994



Aim for the Heart With Gifts From The Mall!

Win a Cruise for Four in The Mall Mystery Contest, See Page 7

Get Your Finances in Shape, See Page 10



Dear Mall Shopper:

We're still hot on the trail of suspects in *The Mall's Murder Mystery*. Solve the mystery, and you could win a Caribbean cruise for a family of four from American Family Cruises, compliments of Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth Vacations. See page 7 for details and GO MYSTERY for all the rules and clues.

There's still time to remember your Valentine with a gift from The Mall. Shop The Mall's Valentine's Day Gift-Guide for last-minute gift ideas. See page 6 for details.

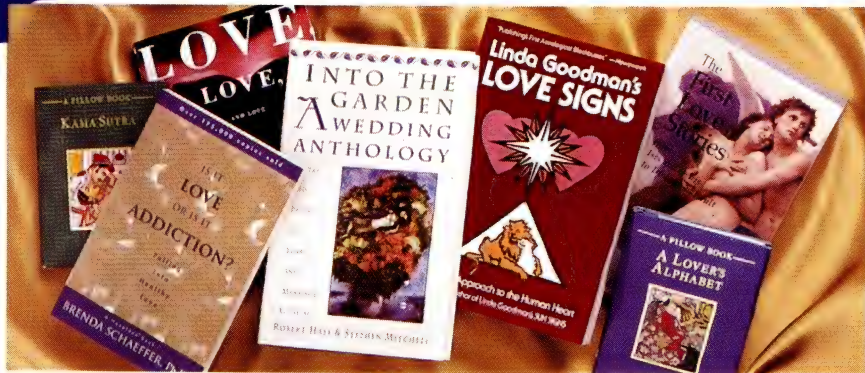
This month, we open The Mall's Fiscal Fitness Center. You'll find great money ideas, free downloads and prizes, too! Everything you need to keep your finances in shape. See page 10 for details.

Welcome this month to three new merchants. Dial-A-Mattress (GO BEDS), Green Mountain Coffee Roasters (GO GMR) and the Pontiac Showroom (GO PONTIAC). Stop in today and look around. Remember, you can shop these new stores — and any Mall store — connect-free, 24 hours a day.

See you online,

Keith Arnold

Keith Arnold
Electronic Mall Manager



Celebrate your love with books from the heart.

Filled with joy and passion, these classic titles from HarperCollins Online will help you and your Valentine celebrate the day in a special way. Choose from *Kama Sutra* (\$8), *Is It Love or Is It Addiction?* (\$10), *Love, Love and Love* (\$20), *Into the Garden: A Wedding Anthology* (\$20), *Linda Goodman's Love Signs* (\$17), *The First Love Stories from Isis and Osiris to Tristan and Iseult* (\$11), *A Lover's Alphabet* (\$8) and many others.

HARPER COLLINS ONLINE. GO HAR

Beguile her with this Belgian Chocolate Valentine.

This Belgian Chocolate Valentine will delight your sweetheart with luscious heart-shaped chocolate pralines and assorted chocolates (8 oz.).

The finest Old World quality. Includes hand-written gift card and two-day shipping.

**ADVENTURES IN FOOD. GO AIF
BELGIAN CHOCOLATE
VALENTINE \$38**



Indulge your Valentine with the Secret of the Savanna Bath Collection.

Botanical extracts and essential oils relax sore muscles and relieve stress. Includes 12-oz. bath salts, 8-oz. moisture replenisher, 3½-oz. cleansing bar and free loofah in reusable pine box. Perfect for men and women. International delivery.

**HEALTH AND VITAMIN EXPRESS. GO RX
SECRET OF THE SAVANNA BATH COLLECTION
LIST PRICE \$40
SALE PRICE \$29.99**

Win hearts of all ages with this cuddly Valentine bear.

This lovable, soft, plush teddy bear will deliver a long, red silk rose to your special someone. In cream or brown, 14" tall. Beautifully boxed and gift-wrapped. International delivery.

**BRETON HARBOR BASKETS AND GIFTS. GO BH
VALENTINE BEAR WITH ROSE
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Share a "perfect moment" with the Perfect Couple Gift Basket.

A delightful way to celebrate Valentine's Day. Includes two heart mugs, two 2-oz. packages of gourmet coffee, cheese and crackers to munch on, and delicious hazelnut shortbread cookies.

COFFEE ANYONE ??? GO COF
PERFECT COUPLE GIFT BASKET \$42.95

Create a romantic Valentine dinner and save \$30, too!

This exclusive heart-shaped casserole will turn out the perfect dinner for two. Le Creuset cast iron absorbs heat evenly, cooks beautifully. Easy to clean. 101-year warranty. 2 qts., 3½" high.

THE CHEF'S CATALOG. GO CC
LE CREUSET HEART-SHAPED CASSEROLE
LIST PRICE \$110
SALE PRICE \$79.99

BEST
BUY!



Get "personal" with imprinted golf balls and tees.

The perfect gift for any golfer. Let Austad's imprint long-distance Senator golf balls with anything your imagination dreams up. Up to 32 characters. Carton of 12. Add a carton of 500 personalized wooden tees for an unforgettable gift!

AUSTAD'S. GO AU
PERSONALIZED GOLF BALLS \$12.50/DOZEN
IMPRINTED GOLF TEES (500 CTN.) \$19.95

Say "I Love You" with flowers and a kiss.

Tell someone special you think they're sweet with this charming Hershey's® Kisses Bouquet arranged in a silver ceramic keepsake container shaped just like the real confection. A "sweet" reminder of your affection.

WALTER KNOLL FLORIST. GO WK
HERSHEY'S KISSES BOUQUET \$42.50



Delight her with delicious chocolate truffles and a rose.

A luscious treat to please your special Valentine — from Betsy Ann Chocolates. Beautiful gift box is topped with red silk rose and filled with 20 oz. of chocolate truffles — the richest chocolates ever created!

**THE GIFT SENDER. 60 GS
TRUFFLES WITH
ROSE \$33
2ND DAY AIR \$9**



Make beautiful music with CDs from Narada Productions.

Narada packages romance in memorable music perfect for sharing on Valentine's Day and throughout the year. Choose *Cristofori's Dream* and *Return to the Heart* featuring pianist David Lantz, or *Follow Me Home* with Wayne Gratz.

**NARADA PRODUCTIONS. 60 NP
VALENTINE CDS \$12.98 EA.
CASSETTES \$9.98 EA.**

Deliver Valentine greetings with this Chocolate Brownie Pizza.

Our 10-inch, heart-shaped deep-dish pizza has a crust of freshly baked chocolate fudge brownies, drizzled liberally with white chocolate "cheese," and topped with crunchy pralines and pecans. Ready to slice in its own pizza box.

**800-FLOWERS & 800-GIFTHOUSE. 60 FGH
CHOCOLATE BROWNIE PIZZA \$28.99**

Send Valentine sentiments with this Staffordshire six-heart dish.

In Colonial America, salt-glaze Staffordshire dishes were favorites on tables from New Hampshire to Maryland. This version is stoneware with lead-free glaze. Oven and dishwasher safe. Diameter, 8 1/4".

**THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. 60 MMA
SIX-HEART DISH \$19.50**

All prices mentioned in *The Electronic Mall Shoppers Guide* are the most accurate prices available at press time. Occasionally a printed price will be out of date.



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Air France offers you over 40 hotels to choose from with values in every price range. Prices start at \$42 per person for double occupancy and include hotel, continental breakfast, taxes and more. For details on all Paris accommodations, request your free France and Europe Flexi-Plan brochure.

AIR FRANCE. GO AF



Show your Valentine how you feel . . . With Love.

Here's the perfect way to pamper your special someone — with an extravagant collection of *With Love* body and bath luxuries. Features 1/8-oz. perfume, 1 1/2-oz. moisturizing body lotion, 1 1/2-oz. dusting powder shaker and 1.7-oz. body cream. All exquisitely packaged for beautiful gift-giving.

COSMETICS EXPRESS. GO CM
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INTRODUCTORY PRICE \$35



Fill the air with love songs from Bose Express Music.

Set a romantic mood with beautiful CDs from Bose Express Music. Select from *Love Songs* by Diane Schuur, *Love Remembers* by George Benson, *Love Deluxe* by Sade, *Musique Nuptiales*, *Mad About Romance*, *Love Gets Strange: The Songs of John Hiatt*. Hundreds of other titles.

BOSE EXPRESS MUSIC. GO BEM
LOVE SONG CDS \$14.99 EA.



Send "Hearts 'n Roses" Delivered With Love.

Say "I Love You" with 7 1/4 luscious ounces of solid milk chocolate hearts lovingly nestled amidst ruby red roses and baby's breath. In a fancy gold gift box with embossed gold gift tag to express your wishes for a "Happy Valentine's Day." Gift 501.

FIGI'S GIFTS. GO FG
"HEARTS 'N ROSES"
DELIVERED WITH LOVE \$11.99





INTERNATIONAL
DELIVERY
AVAILABLE

Wear a Coed Canvas Field Coat for easy comfort.

You'll want to spend a lot of time in this coat! Rugged, 100% cotton canvas with a contrasting corduroy collar and roll-up cuffs. Big roomy pockets, plus inside zip pocket. Machine wash. Many colors and sizes.

LANDS' END. GO LANDS

COED CANVAS FIELD COAT

WOMEN'S (S, M, L) \$69.50 MEN'S (M, L, XL) \$69.50 MEN'S TALL (M, L, XL, XXL) \$75



Give her diamond earrings at dazzling savings.

Diamond earrings make a brilliant gift for Valentine's Day — or any special occasion. And the savings are just as stunning — 50% off retail! Pictured 1.00 CT stud earrings are set in solid 14KT gold Tiffany® type settings. 100% guaranteed. Free delivery and gift box.

FINE JEWELRY OUTLET. GO FJO

1.00 CT TW DIAMOND STUD EARRINGS

RETAIL PRICE \$2,500

OUR PRICE \$1,299



Win her heart with Long Distance Roses.

No other flower expresses your love as perfectly as long-stemmed roses. Cut daily, we carefully pack one dozen 18" to 22" roses in water, include accent flowers and ship in a special styrofoam shipping box. Guaranteed to arrive *overnight*! Order by 6:00 p.m. ET. Price includes overnight shipping.

THE FLOWER STOP. GO FS

ONE DOZEN ROSES

BEFORE FEB. 1, \$49.95

FROM FEB. 1-15, \$69.95

Shop the Valentine's Day Gift Guide for great gifts!

We've gathered dozens of terrific gifts in The Mall's Valentine's Day Gift Guide and organized them by category to make your Valentine shopping easier. Select from *Hearts and Flowers*, *Seductive Suggestions*, *Cupid's Choice*, and *The Way to His Heart*. View select GIF graphics, too. Plus, enter Valentine contests at 800-Flowers & 800-Gifhouse (GO FGH); Cosmetics Express (GO CM); and The Gift Sender (GO GS). Stop by for your chance to win exciting prizes. GO MALL to send Cupid on his way!



Wrap him in a warm terry robe from Brooks Brothers.

This rich terry robe is a Brooks Brothers exclusive. Extra plush, 16-oz. looped cotton terry is cut full for a luxurious fit. Shawl collar, cuffed sleeves, self-belt. 50" length. White, navy or hunter. Monogramming, add \$18.

BROOKS BROTHERS. GO BR

TERRY ROBE \$125

INTERNATIONAL
DELIVERY
AVAILABLE

MALL MYSTERY

Step into The Mall's Murder Mystery adventure — filled with fun, intrigue and prizes.

Solve the crime and you'll be eligible to win a Caribbean cruise for a family of four from American Family Cruises, compliments of Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth Vacations (GO CRUISE).

To solve the mystery, follow the clues and watch for tips each week from Chip Head, private eye. Guess the correct killer, why and how the crime took place, and you could win the Caribbean cruise or one of dozens of other prizes! GO MYSTERY



Plus You Could Win One of Dozens of Other Prizes

- CompuServe connect-time credits from \$10 to \$100. From PC Catalog, GO PCA.
 - Bausch & Lomb binoculars, retail value \$169.99. From JCPenney, GO JCP.
 - Silver-plated candlesticks, retail value \$50. From Breton Harbor Baskets and Gifts, GO BH.
 - *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego* deluxe version on CD-ROM, retail value \$34.95. From Dalco Computer Electronics, GO DA.
 - Mystery books by Dorothy L. Sayers, retail value \$8. From HarperCollins Online, GO HAR.
 - Car Butler alarm, retail value \$99. From Automobile Information Center, GO AI.
- Plus much, much more!

Solve The Mall Mystery and Win a Caribbean Cruise!

Win a Seven-Day Family Caribbean Cruise From Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth Vacations

The Grand Prize for the winning sleuth will be a seven-day cruise for a family of four with the world's greatest family vacation company, American Family Cruises. There'll be a choice of two cruise routes, plus an extra \$1,000 for expenses or plane fare. One Grand Prize winner will be randomly selected from among all CompuServe members who crack the case. See complete rules online. GO MYSTERY

The Suspects . . .



Mr. Baud
Don's Boss



Mo Dem
A Bookie



Dot Matrix
Don's Wife



Anita Lan
Frantic Mall Shopper



C. D. Rom
Don's Accountant



Mac Cim
Mo Dem's Goon



Mouse Muldoon
Baseball Pitcher



Cher Ware
Owner of Emerald Gambling Establishment

MALL REFERENCE

A wide world of shopping
at your fingertips.

Shopping has never been easier.

The Electronic Mall puts over

120 stores at your fingertips.

You can shop free 24 hours a day,

365 days a year, for a wide array

of products, information and

services. Use the handy directory

on these two pages for a complete

listing by category of Mall stores

and their GO commands. Then

GO MALL to shop online or to find

worldwide shipping information,

payment options, a detailed product

index, a directory of print catalogs,

and the latest Mall news, events and

contests. GO MALL

No matter which pricing plan you have on CompuServe,
shopping The Electronic Mall is connect-free, 24 hours
a day, 365 days a year.

APPAREL/DEPARTMENT STORES

AC	Americana Clothing
AU	Austad's •
BR	Brooks Brothers
JCP	JCPenney ■
LANDS	Lands' End
▼ LEGGS	L'Eggs Hanes Bali Playtex
PG	Patagonia •
PFS	Paul Fredrick Shirt Company
SAC	Shoppers Advantage Club •

CATALOG INFO



ONLINE

ARTS/MUSIC/VIDEO

BN	Barnes & Noble
CD	BMG Compact Disc Club •
BOT	Books on Tape •
BEM	Bose Express Music
▼ CVA	Colonel Video & Audio
FREECD	Columbia House •
CCV	Critics' Choice Video •
JR	Justice Records
LE	The Laser's Edge
MMA	The Metropolitan Museum of Art
MAO	Music Alley Online
NP	Narada Productions

AUTO/BOAT/RV

AI	Automobile Information Center
AQ	AutoQuot-R
ATV	AutoVantage Online •
BUICK	Buick Magazine •
FORD	Ford Electronic Showroom ■
FMC	Ford Motor Company ■
LM	Lincoln-Mercury Electronic Showroom ■
▼ PON	Pontiac Showroom •

BOOKS/PERIODICALS

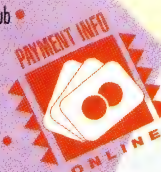
BOMC	Book-Of-The-Month Clubs •
BOT	Books On Tape •
BH	Breton Harbor Baskets and Gifts
CT	CareerTrack ■
CBK	CompuBooks
ORDER	CompuServe Store ★
DB	Data Based Advisor
ENT	Entrepreneur Group •
HAR	HarperCollins Online •
HCB	History Book-Of-The-Month Club •
JR	Justice Records
LOS	Library of Science Book Club •
MMP	Macmillan Publishing Company •
MC	MacUser
MSP	Microsoft Press ■
MH	McGraw-Hill On-Line Bookstore
NN	NewsNet ■
ND	Nicholas Direct
PCC	PC/Computing
PM	PC Magazine
PCB	PC Publications
PRC	PRC Database Publishing
PPP	Peachpit Press
QPB	Quality Paperback Book Club •
BK	Small Computer Book Club •
▼ USM	U.S. News Magazine
VNR	VNR Bookstore Cafe
WB	WaldenCOMPUTERBooks
JW	Wiley Pro-Shop •
WS	Windows Sources

CLUBS/MEMBERSHIPS

ATV	AutoVantage Online •
CD	BMG Compact Disc Club •
BOMC	Book-Of-The-Month Clubs •
BEM	Bose Express Music
CCB	Children's Book-Of-The-Month Club •
FREECD	Columbia House •
▼ CARD	CompuServe Visa Store
FFS	Florida Fruit Shippers ★
FCB	Fortune Book-Of-The-Month Club
LOS	Library of Science Book Club •
QPB	Quality Paperback Book Club •
SAC	Shoppers Advantage Club •
BK	Small Computer Book Club •
SP	Softdisk Publishing
TTC	The Travel Club + TWA Services •

COMPUTER HARDWARE/ SUPPLIES

DP	AT&T Online Store ■
CTR	CitiTronics Memory •
CBK	CompuBooks
CE	Computer Express
CS	Computer Shopper
CA	Concord Direct
DA	Dalco Computer Electronics
DD	Digital's PC Store •
DM	Direct Micro
HTH	The Heath Company
IL	IBMLink
JDR	JDR Microdevices
MMP	Macmillan Publishing Company •
MC	MacUser
MW	MacWarehouse
MZ	Mac Zone/PC Zone
MH	The McGraw-Hill On-line Bookstore
MCS	Mission Control Software
MCW	MicroWarehouse
OM	Omron •
PA	Parsons Technology
PCA	PC Catalog •
PCC	PC/Computing
PM	PC Magazine
PCB	PC Publications
PRC	PRC Database Publishing
SR	Sears •
BK	Small Computer Book Club •
WS	Windows Sources



ONLINE

THE
ELECTRONIC
M·A·L·L®

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

BB	Broderbund
BUICK	Buick Magazine •
CF	Checkfree Corporation •
ORDER	CompuServe Store ★
CE	Computer Express
CS	Computer Shopper
DB	Data Based Advisor
DD	Digital's PC Store •
FORD	Ford Electronic Showroom ■
IBMSP	IBM Personal Software Products •
JDR	JDR Microdevices
MW	MacWarehouse
NZ	Mac Zone/PC Zone
MCS	Mission Control Software
MCW	MicroWarehouse
PA	Parsons Technology
PCA	PC Catalog •
SAF	Safeware Computer Insurance
SD	Shareware Depot ■
SI	Sierra Online
SP	Softdisk Publishing

COSMETICS/JEWELRY

CL	Contact Lens Supply ■
CM	Cosmetics Express ■
FJO	Fine Jewelry Outlet

GIFTS/FLOWERS/ GOURMET FOODS

FGH	800-Flowers & 800-Gifthouse
AIF	Adventures in Food ★
AK	Alaska Peddler
AE	American Express •
BH	Breton Harbor Baskets and Gifts
BR	Brooks Brothers
CC	The Chef's Catalog •
COF	Coffee Anyone ???
EX	Executive Stamper ■
▼ FG	Figi's Gifts •
FJO	Fine Jewelry Outlet
FFS	Florida Fruit Shippers ★
FS	Flower Stop •
GW	Garrett Wade Woodworking
GS	The Gift Sender
GIM	Gimmee Jimmy's Cookies
▼ GMR	Green Mountain Coffee Roasters •
HS	Hammacher Schlemmer
HAM	Honey Baked Ham •
LANDS	Lands' End
LE	The Laser's Edge
MMA	The Metropolitan Museum of Art
OS	Omaha Steaks •
PFS	Paul Fredrick Shirt Company
RM	Rent Mother Nature
SN	Sunglasses, Shavers & More
VA	Virginia Diner
WK	Walter Knoll Florist

HOBBIES/TOYS/PETS

GW	Garrett Wade Woodworking
MAO	Music Alley Online
RM	Rent Mother Nature

INVESTMENTS/FINANCE/ REAL ESTATE

INC	Business Incorporating Guide
CT	CareerTrack ■
CF	Checkfree Corporation •
CORP	The Company Corporation
▼ CARD	CompuServe Visa Store
CIC	Continental Insurancecenter •
DR	Dreyfus Corp. •
ENT	Entrepreneur Group •
HRB	H&R Block •
HF	HomeFinder by AMS ■
TKR	Max Ule Discount Brokerage ★
MFM	Money's Financial Market •
NN	NewsNet ■
RELO	Relocation Network •
SAF	Safeware Computer Insurance
SD	Shareware Depot ■
CRE	TRW Credentials •
TC	Twentieth Century Mutual Funds
UP	University of Phoenix •
JW	Wiley Pro-Shop •

MERCHANDISE/ ELECTRONICS

CC	The Chef's Catalog
▼ CVA	Colonel Video & Audio
CA	Concord Direct ★
▼ CFD	Crutchfield Electronics •
▼ BEDS	Dial-A-Matress
FMC	Ford Motor Company ■
HS	Hammacher Schlemmer
HTH	The Heath Company
JCP	JCPenney ■
PWP	Penny Wise Custom Print Shop •
SR	Sears •
SN	Sunglasses, Shavers and More
ZBEST	Z Best Electronics & Appliance



OFFICE SUPPLIES/ BUSINESS SERVICES

INC	Business Incorporating Guide
CT	CareerTrack ■
CORP	The Company Corporation
▼ CARD	CompuServe Visa Store
DM	Direct Micro
DR	Dreyfus Corp. •
EX	Executive Stamper ■
HRB	H&R Block •
TTS	H&R Block Tax Training School •
HF	HomeFinder by AMS ■
TKR	Max Ule Discount Brokerage ★
ND	Nicholas Direct
PWP	Penny Wise Custom Print Shop •
PW	Penny Wise Office Products •
RELO	Relocation Network •
SR	Sears •
TC	Twentieth Century Mutual Funds
▼ USM	U.S. News Magazine

SPORTS/FITNESS/HEALTH

AC	Americana Clothing
AU	Austad's •
CT	CareerTrack ■
CL	Contact Lens Supply ■
RX	Health & Vitamin Express
▼ SDV	SDV Vitamins ★
▼ OLY	The Synergy Group

TRAVEL/VACATIONS

AF	Air France ■
AK	Alaska Peddler
AE	American Express •
▼ CRUISE	Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth •
▼ OLY	The Synergy Group
TTC	The Travel Club + TWA Services •

HOW TO SHOP:

When you see a product you would like to purchase, if prompted, type "O" to order. Otherwise, simply select the item from the menu. Continue shopping, or complete the order by typing "CHECKOUT." An electronic order form will appear and you will be prompted for all pertinent information such as size, color, delivery method and credit card billing. To cancel your order at any time, type "EXIT." Before your order is sent to the Mall merchant, you will have the opportunity to verify that your order is correct and to make any necessary changes. Once your order is complete, a CompuServe order number will be given.

SHIPPING:

Shipping in most stores in The Electronic Mall is available to CompuServe members around the world. Certain postal, national and trade laws prevent certain Electronic Mall merchants from being able to ship their goods to all areas. The following guide will help you with your store selection:

- U.S. Only
- U.S. and Canada
- ▼ The Electronic Mall is pleased to welcome our newest merchants!
- ★ Please go online for details
- All other merchants ship worldwide.

GO MALL

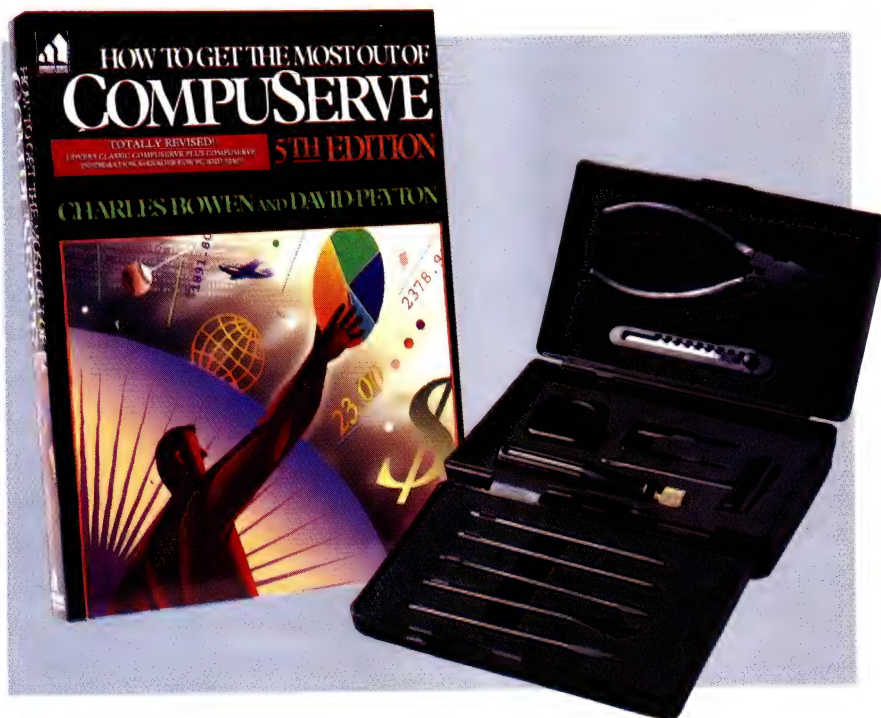


Get Your Finances in Shape With The Mall's Fiscal Fitness Center!

Now's the perfect time to strengthen your financial position, add a little muscle to your bottom line, firm up your future and cut your taxes to the bone. The Mall's Fiscal Fitness Center is designed to give you all the financial information, advice and ideas you need. You'll find tax-time software; books, videos and audio tapes on financial management; investment information and opportunities — plus **free** demo downloads, **free** gifts and connect-time credits! GO FFC

Here are a few of the special offers you'll find:

- Order any *TaxCut* software program by MECA at Computer Express and get a \$5 connect-time credit — **free**. GO CE
- Take a short survey at Continental Insurance and get a **free** Personal Assistance Card (a \$12 value). GO CIC
- Register to win a **free** *MasterBanking* software kit from MasterBanking. GO MB
- Apply for a CompuServe Visa® card at The CompuServe Visa Store. GO CARD



Stock Up On Super Computer Savings at the CompuServe Store!

Take advantage of the great buys going on during the CompuServe Store's Semi-Annual Super Sale, now through the end of March. Save \$6 on *How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe*, new fifth edition — regular price \$25, **now only \$18.95**. Get a **free** CompuServe Tool Kit (\$11.50 value) with any \$50 purchase. Plus, save \$29.95 on *The Computer Navigator for Windows*, regular price \$79.95, **now just \$50** — and get a \$25 connect-time credit. Don't miss it!

COMPUERVE STORE. GO ORDER

THE COMPUERVE COMMITMENT TO ELECTRONIC SHOPPING

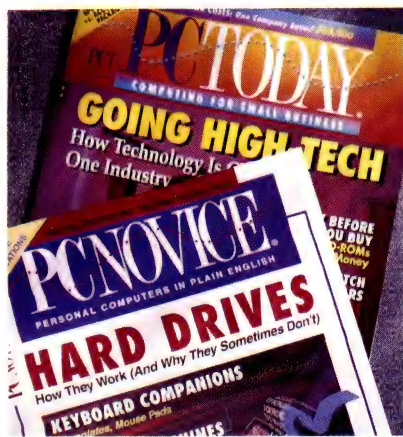


As a CompuServe shopper, you are on the leading edge, shopping today the way the rest of the world will shop in years to come — electronically! We are continually striving to expand our roster of stores to provide you with the best products, services and information available. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

GO MALLMANAGER



**SHOPPERS
GUIDE**



Subscribe to PC Novice or PC Today — and get the most out of your computer.

PC Novice was designed to take the confusion out of learning to use computers. Every issue is full of information that teaches computer basics and everyday applications. PC Today focuses on how your small business can utilize computer technology to become more productive and profitable.

**PC PUBLICATIONS. GO PC8
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Order Best of 'GO GRAPHICS' for only \$12.50!

This spectacular book contains over 2,000 black-and-white representations of the most popular images on CompuServe.

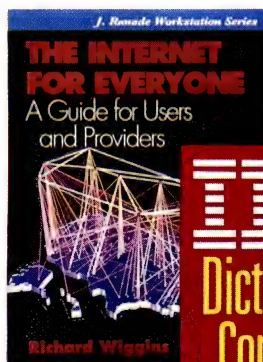
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Save \$30 on this 5" portable black-and-white TV and radio.

This compact, 5", black-and-white TV is great for countertop, bedside or desk. Features AM/FM radio, telescopic antenna and headphone jack. Runs on AC/DC or batteries (not included). Twelve-volt car/boat adapter included. 7 1/4" x 6 3/4" x 8". Savings for non-members, too! Model #TVP6CT.

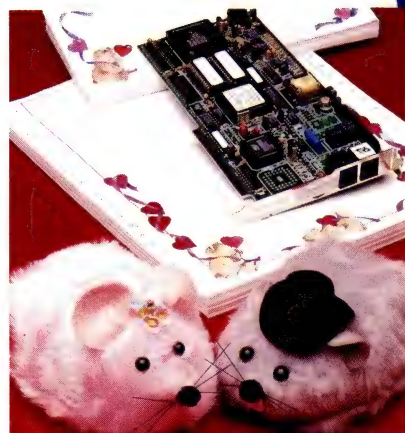
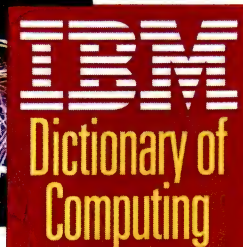
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PORTABLE 5" TV WITH RADIO
LIST PRICE \$89.95
MEMBER'S LOW PRICE \$59**



Get a gold mine of PC information from McGraw-Hill.

Explore Internet — the "network of networks" and learn how to tap into its wealth of information. Plus, access the most comprehensive computing dictionary ever published. Over 18,000 entries.

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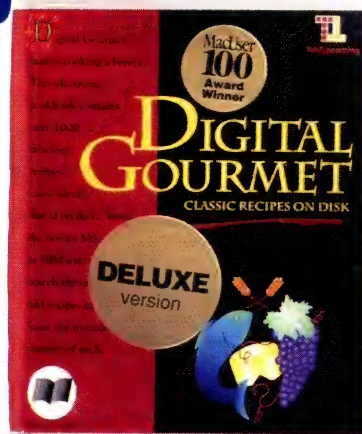


Speed communications with Zoom Telephonics fax/modems.

Send your Valentine's Day greetings faster than ever with a Zoom Telephonics V.32bis 14.4 bps fax/modem from Direct Micro. 100% Hayes-compatible. Outstanding seven-year warranty. Computer accessories available online.

**DIRECT MICRO. GO DM
INTERNAL W/WINDOWS \$139
EXTERNAL W/WINDOWS \$165
EXTERNAL FOR MACINTOSH \$175**





Cook like a pro with Digital Gourmet Deluxe.

Digital Gourmet Deluxe is a collection of all nine cookbooks in the award-winning series — includes Classic French, Russian, Greek, Kosher, African, Salads and Breads, Lactose-Free, much more. Mac Plus or higher.

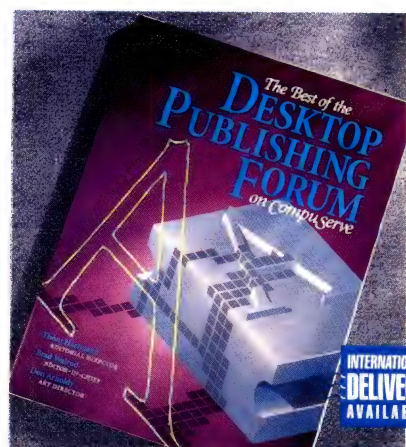
MACWAREHOUSE. GO MW
DIGITAL GOURMET DELUXE \$95



Save \$200 on the Omron Toucan Personal Digital Companion.

This compact powerhouse weighs only two lbs., measures only 9½" x 6¾" x 1½", yet it provides full PC capabilities with an on-board fax/modem! Embedded software includes contact manager (with word processing) database, calendar, fax/modem and E-mail.

OMRON ELECTRONICS. GO OM
TOUCAN PERSONAL DIGITAL COMPANION
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Use HomeFinder by AMS — the quick and convenient way to research a community before you move. Find the neighborhood that's right for you, the schools that are best for your family, a reputable realtor, employment opportunities and more! Details online.

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JCPENNEY. GO JCP

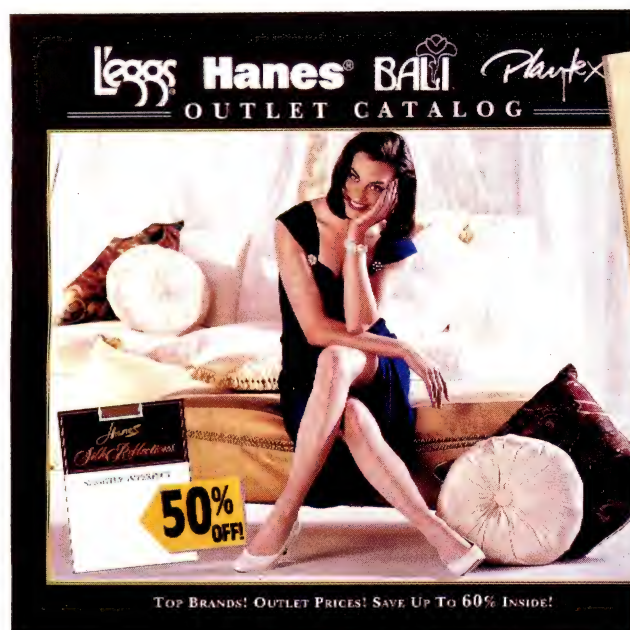


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L'EGGS HANES BALI PLAYTEX. GO LEGGS

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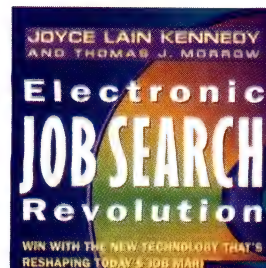
MAX ULE DISCOUNT BROKERAGE. GO TKR



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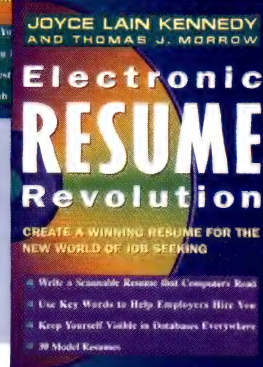
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- Keep Yourself Visible in Databases Everywhere
- 30 Model Resumes

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WILEY PRO-SHOP. GO JW

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The AT&T Videophone 2500, with full color and motion video, brings phone conversations to life by letting you see and hear your calling party. During this "two-for" promotion, you'll also receive \$50 worth of AT&T Long Distance Certificates free!

SEARS. GO SR
TWO AT&T 2500 VIDEOPHONES
"TWO-FOR" PRICE \$1,998



Save over \$100 on your favorite CDs with The BMG CD Club.

Collect the music you love and build your CD collection at incredible savings. Join the BMG Compact Disc Club and take four free CDs now. Buy one more selection at regular Club price and then get three more CDs free! Over \$100 in savings, and nothing more to buy ever! Select from hundreds of releases.

BMG COMPACT DISC CLUB. GO CD/GO BMG

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Book Reviews

Following are summaries of book reviews available for reading this month in *Online Today*. To read the complete reviews, use the GO commands listed at the end of each summary.

Whole Earth Online Almanac

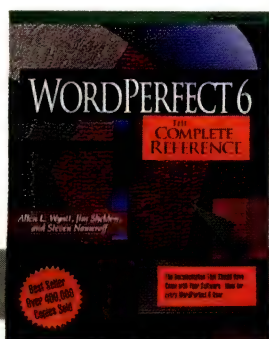
By Don Rittner
Brady Books, 1993
546 pages, \$32.95 (softcover)

Whether you're looking for online information on meteorology or psychology, agriculture or education, this book offers the electronic locations of all the conferences, databases and mailing lists on hundreds of topics. Reviewer Paul A. Gilster says the book is especially well-suited for the home user but is limiting for the business community. *GO OLT-5500*

The Underground Guide to Laser Printers

By the Editors of *Flash Magazine*
Peachpit Press, 1993
162 pages, \$12 (softcover)

This compendium of material previously published in *Flash Magazine* is much like a "greatest hits album" of laser printing advice, tips and techniques. Because the articles were contributed by numerous authors over a period of several years, the overall quality is uneven and not well organized, says reviewer Franklyn Jones. *GO OLT-5540*



WordPerfect 6: The Complete Reference

By Allen L. Wyatt, Jim Sheldon and Steve Nameroff
Osborne/McGraw-Hill, 1993
979 pages, \$29.95 (softcover)

Detailed coverage of every feature, tight organization for fast reference, and lots of helpful illustrations have been hallmarks of this reference since the first edition, and this latest incarnation is no exception. Reviewer William J. Lynott says it lives up to its advertising claims. It really is the only reference tool you'll need for WordPerfect 6.0. *GO OLT-5530*

Inside the Norton Utilities 7.0 (Fourth Edition)

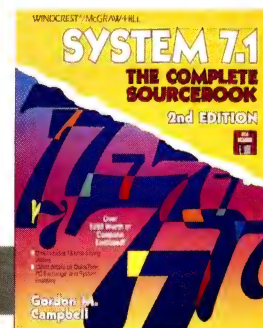
By Rob Krumm
Brady Books, 1993
711 pages, \$26.95 (softcover)

Here's an interesting idea: an after-market computer book that actually tells you more than the user manual does. Because improper use of many of the Norton utilities can trash data instead of save it, it is worth having information that goes beyond the bare-bones information in the Symantec user manual, says reviewer Richard A. Danca. *GO OLT-5520*

Murphy's Laws of Windows

By Charlie Russel and Sharon Crawford
Sybex, 1993
338 pages, \$16.95 (softcover)

Get the best out of your computer before it gets the best of you is the philosophy of the "Murphy's Laws" computer book series. Reviewer James Moran says that irreverent attitude combined with lots of plain-English, problem-solving advice makes this the most readable computer book he's seen in some time. *GO OLT-5510*



System 7.1: The Complete Sourcebook (Second Edition)

By Gordon M. Campbell
Windcrest/McGraw-Hill, 1993
448 pages, \$32.95 (softcover, includes one 3.5-inch diskette)

Although this book features clear, well-written prose that is enhanced by an excellent design and illustrations, reviewer Anthony Watkins finds annoying the author's nautical theme for explaining the ins and outs of System 7. *GO OLT-5550*

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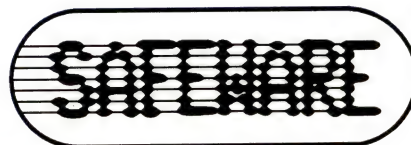
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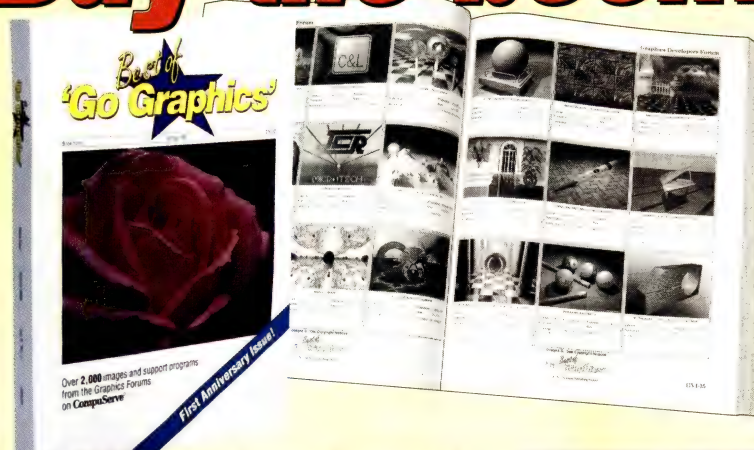
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BMG	Page 41	GO BMG	NeoSoft	Page 43	800/545-1392 ext. 50
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Dreyfus	Page 25	GO DR	Sears	Page 55	GO SR
Electronic Mall (The)	Page 60	GO MALL	Shoppers Advantage	Page 53	GO SAC
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Jennifer Stothers
212/366-0393

Midwest and West
Tom Emmons
614/457-8600

South and Northeast
Scott Tillett
614/457-8600

How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe

with Charles Bowen



Where on CompuServe can I find a copy of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and other important government documents?

Norman Milsner
Camp Connell, California

A little research online determined that *Grolier's Academic American Encyclopedia* (GO ENCYCLOPEDIA) is a good source for such historical documents. At the encyclopedia's search prompt, type CONSTITUTION as the keyword for a half-dozen entries, including the full text of the U.S. document with all articles and amendments individually accessible from a menu. For the Bill of Rights, see the first 10 amendments.

Also, for contemporary U.S. government documents, the White House Forum (GO WHITEHOUSE) and the Political Debate Forum (GO POLITICS) regularly add documents to their libraries. For instance, last fall on the same day that President Clinton submitted his health-care proposal to Congress, the entire 1,336-page proposal was uploaded to the libraries of the Political Debate Forum. In the forum's Library 4, "Health Care," you'll find the complete text as an ASCII file (HSPLN.TXT, 363,201 bytes) and an archived file (HSPLAN.ZIP, 111,034 bytes). You also can view selected sections of the plan by browsing the library using the keywords HEALTH SECURITY, which displays some 30 smaller files that break out the proposal's text.

I'm looking for a forum that discusses neural networks but I haven't found it yet. Any ideas for the research would be appreciated.

Josep Roman
Barcelona, Spain

Check out the AI Expert Forum (GO AIEPERT), which discusses all forms of artificial intelligence. Also, the new Cyber

Forum (GO CYBERFORUM) invites discussion of all "new edge" technology, so it might be a possibility.

Where can I go to find answers to general questions about CompuServe?

Eric A. Melum
St. Paul, Minnesota

Two free forums are especially useful: the CompuServe Help Forum (GO HELP-FORUM) for general CompuServe questions and the Practice Forum (GO PRACTICE) for help specifically with forum use. Also, the Feedback area (GO FEEDBACK) has a number of menus of frequently asked questions.

There is an abundance of "WAV" sound files for the PC, notably in the Space Forum. These range from John Kennedy's famous moon speech to Neil Armstrong's immortal words "... one small step ..." Is there an easy way to

convert this file format to enable Amiga users such as myself to enjoy these classic moments of history?

Peter G. Ducker
Weymouth, Dorset, U.K.

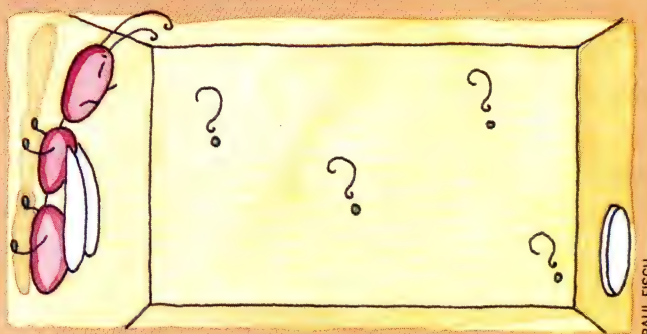
There is a specific forum covering sound board technology with a section of its message board and a library devoted specifically to the Amiga. Drop by the Amiga Arts Forum's (GO AMIGAARTS) Section 7, "Music and MIDI," and the MIDI/Music Forum's (GO MIDIFORUM) Section 6, "Amiga." Post a message there to get in touch with other Amiga users who are into the sound boards.

Charles Bowen is a contributing editor of CompuServe Magazine and co-author of the How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe book series and author of CompuServe from A to Z from Random House.

Send questions to CompuServe User ID number 70007,411. If your question is answered in this column, we'll apply a \$25 connect credit to your CompuServe account.

Mensa® Puzzler

This month's puzzle was submitted by CompuServe member Alan B. Corlin. You'll find the answer to this month's puzzle in the Mensa Forum's News Flash (GO MENSA).



An ant is trapped inside a shoebox that is 10 inches long by 4 inches wide. The ant is one-eighth of an inch in length and, at the moment, is located in the center of one of the end panels, one inch down from the top of the box. The ant notices a hole on the opposite end panel. The hole is also centered, but is one inch down from the bottom of the box. The ant is red, not black.

Without flying, what is the shortest traveling distance for the ant to reach the hole and escape?

Do you have a Puzzler that you'd like to share with CM readers? Send your entry of no more than five brief puzzles (with answers) to: Puzzlers, *CompuServe Magazine*, P.O. Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220. Include your full name, address, daytime telephone number and CompuServe User ID number. Puzzles that are not sensitive to character positioning may be sent by CompuServe Mail to User ID number 76004,3302. If your puzzle is used here, we'll credit \$35 to your CompuServe account.

Graphic of the Month



CM's Graphic of the Month is a GIF image of "Saturn over Fantasyland" by Detlef and Andreas Petrausch. The image is composed of three pictures joined together by a picture-to-picture maximum operation with software developed by the authors. They used a parallel computer system composed of five Transputers with an Amiga 2000 host. Because the image contains 136 grey-levels, normal VGA-cards are not recommended for viewing this image. SAT.GIF is located in the Siemens Automatisierungs Forum's (GO AUTFORUM) Library 2, "Allgemein/General." The father-son team became interested in non-linear systems

and fractal geometry in 1985 after reading an article in *Scientific American*. They later presented their work at exhibitions and developed a system for digital image processing and video applications.

This month's runners-up are "Rotating Pendulum Clock" by Steve Anger, found in the Graphics Developers Forum (GO GRAPHDEV), Library 9, "POV Images," PCLOCK.GIF (253,963 bytes); and "Imagine Glass Attributes Example" by Ronald J. Chapman, located in the Graphics Plus Forum (GO GRAPHPLUS), Library 16, "Fractals/Raytracing," GLASSH.JPG (73,853 bytes).

If you have a favorite image on CompuServe, consider nominating it as a Graphic of the Month. Provide the file name and identify the forum and library where the image is stored (do not send the files themselves) and send the information by CompuServe Mail to User ID number 76004,716. If the image you nominate is published in this column, you and the image uploader/creator will receive a \$25 CompuServe account credit. Image uploaders/creators are permitted to nominate themselves, but only one \$25 credit is applied to each member.

MEMBER ESSAY

What's in a Name? Many Blessed Events

I use CompuServe fairly often for searches on software or hardware problems. On one occasion, however, something special happened.

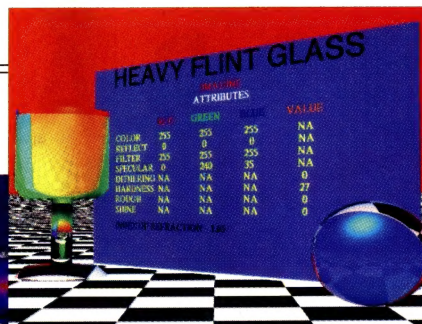
In July 1993, my wife gave birth to our second son. We decided a long time before to name the child Paul, if it were a boy. As with all special occasions, we wanted to tell our friends, so we created a birth announcement using the poem "Tao Te Ching" by Laoze.

Because we have friends in the United States, I wanted the card not only in German but also in English. I posted a message in the Literary Forum (GO LITFORUM) in search of a translation. I wrote a brief description of the poem but

did not mention the name of my child. Within hours, I got a reply from an American member. What makes this special is that the person who sent me two translations of the poem is named Paul. Out of millions of members, a Paul answers to a problem for a newborn Paul.

Hansueli Goeldi
Suhr, Switzerland

Compete for \$50 worth of connect-time credits in *CompuServe Magazine's* monthly Member Essay contest. Write a 200-word essay describing an original way you've used the Information Service and send it to CompuServe User ID number 76004,3302. Include your full name and address.



TIPS OF THE MONTH

As a pastor, I do a lot of word processing. I often need to work on my files at home but, alas, I use a PC (8088) at the office and a Macintosh SE at home. I investigated a lot of high-cost hardware and software solutions until a great idea struck me. I could e-mail files to myself from the office to home (and vice versa) on CompuServe. I simply save my files as "ASCII" or "Text," send them to myself via CompuServe Mail, import them into my word processing program and go to work. I usually have to do some reformatting, but this solves the compatibility problem quite nicely for me.

Tom Welch
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

When I joined CompuServe, I was overwhelmed by the amount of material available. I noticed that some libraries have one listing of all the forum's files. Now when I join or enter a new forum, I download the table of contents to peruse at my leisure. I can go in and retrieve specific files and not waste connect time searching through all the library files in a forum.

I also located some three-ring-punched bond paper so I can print off text files, file lists, read me's, or program manuals and store them in a binder, so they're available when I need them.

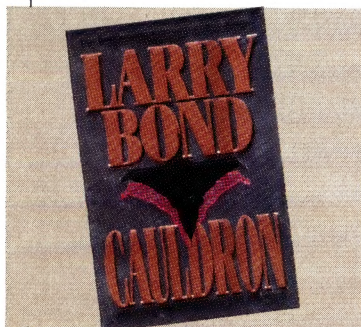
Carl A. Carter
Hillsboro, Oregon

One of my friends who had just joined CompuServe forgot his User ID number after installing WinCIM and had thrown away the letter containing it. I logged onto CompuServe, checked the Membership Directory (GO DIRECTORY) and retrieved his ID number for him. Fortunately, he did remember his password.

Zack Johnson
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

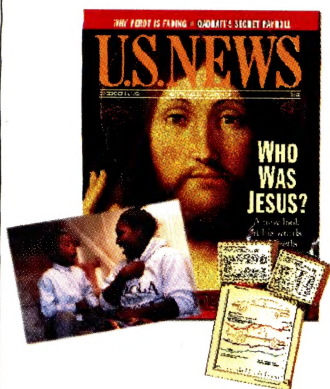
Have a good tip about using the Information Service that you'd like to share with other CompuServe members? Send it to CompuServe User ID number 76004,3302 and type "Tip of the Month Contest" on the subject line. If your tip is published in this column, we'll apply a \$25 connect-time credit to your CompuServe account.

UPDATE



Meet the Best-Selling Authors

Discuss books and meet best-selling authors such as Larry Bond, author of *Cauldron*, in the Author of the Week Forum, part of the Time Warner Trade Publishing area. Editors from Little, Brown and Company and Warner Books also answer questions and discuss books such as best sellers *Bridges of Madison County* and *Slow Waltz at Cedar Bend* by Robert James Wallar. Forum libraries contain full-color book cover images, author photos and tour schedules. GO TWEF



Read All About It in U.S. News

Read *U.S. News & World Report* in the *U.S. News Online* area. This family of services includes the *U.S. News Forum*, where you can interact with the magazine's editors; the *U.S. News Archival Database*, which includes issues dating back to 1986; and the current week's issue. GO USNEWS

Hourly connect-time charges for CompuServe members under the Standard Pricing plan have been reduced. Beginning February 6, the hourly cost for accessing the Information Service at 300 to 2400 bps is \$4.80 and \$9.60 for 9600 to 14,400 bps. This represents savings of up to 40 percent. GO RATES

CompuServe now has the capability to display extended characters, such as accents and umlauts, within key areas of the Information Service, including CompuServe Mail and European-based forums. Support for extended characters will soon be available in all forums. GO OQA

Take an online media survey through February 24 and receive a \$3.50 usage credit. The survey asks about your reading preferences, such as what magazines and newspapers you read, and is free of connect-time charges. GO MEDIASURVEY

Follow the action of the 1994 Winter Olympics with AP Online and the Reuter News Pictures Forum. AP Online's Sports section provides comprehensive results and feature stories; Reuter News Pictures offers photos in GIF and JPEG formats. GO APO, GO NEWSPIX

Magazine Database Plus now offers full-text articles from *Time*, *Forbes*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Money*, *Sports Illustrated* and *MacLean's*. GO MAGDB

The Edinburgh, Scotland, node allows access to CompuServe at modem speeds of up to 9600 bps. The number is 031 557 5888. Access is free of communication surcharges during non-prime time (weekdays from 19:00 to 8:00 and all day on weekends) and is \$7.70 during prime-time (all other times). GO LOGON

During February, the \$5 scan charge is waived for Medical and Allied Health SmartSCANS. SmartSCAN topics include medical research, pharmacology, nursing and allied services, and consumer health. GO IQUEST

Download and get support for all Ziff-Davis benchmarks in the Ziff-Davis Benchmark Forum, including *PC Magazine* benchmarks; PC Bench 8.0, the newest version of the industry standard for measuring the performance of DOS PCs; and MacBench 1.0, a subsystem-level Macintosh benchmark. GO ZDBENCH

NEXT MONTH • All Things 'Cyber': An Online Guide to Culture of the Future • Harmonious Notes: Lotus Diversifies and Thrives • Presentation Software: Programs That Show Your Stuff • Money for Something: Business Startup Funding • Interactive Publishing: Media Meet the Masses

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Thom Hartmann,
Sysop, Desktop Publishing Forum

"In May of this year we incorporated with you and are extremely happy with the services you provided. With your services, you took the mystery out of incorporating and made Delaware law work for us. It's also nice to know that whenever we have a question, we can just dial you up (as we did quite a few times when we were filling out those S status filing and EIN application forms!). Thanks again for all your help!"

Janice and Robert Pfister
J&R Marketing Incorporated

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Julian Sorel
Sorel Data Services

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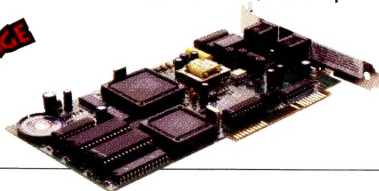
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